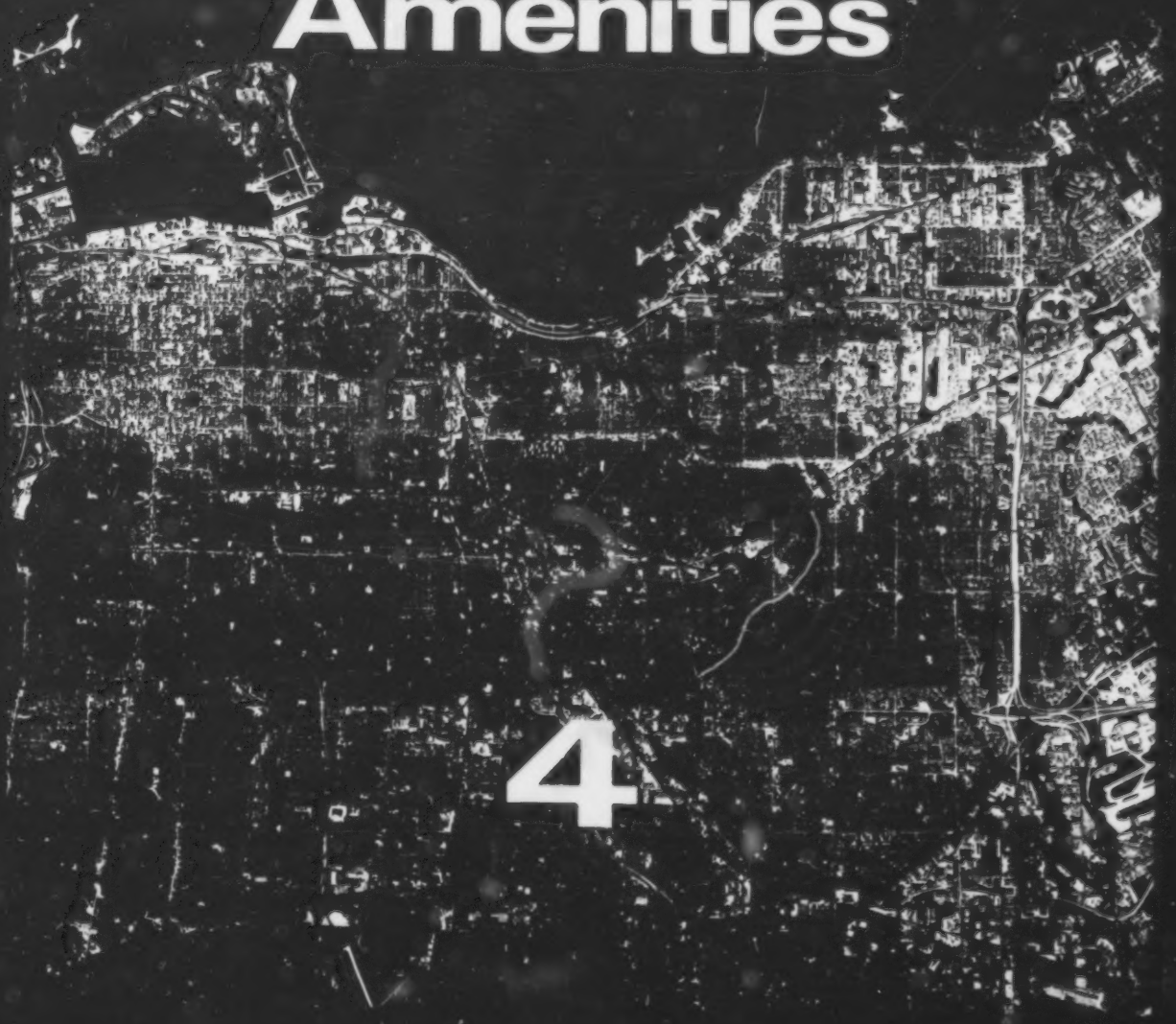
Royal Commission on the Future
of the Toronto Waterfront

Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities



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Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront

CANADA

Commission royale sur l'avenir du secteur riverain de Toronto

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Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to provide a copy of the Report made to me by the Parks, Pleasures and Public Amenities Work Group of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront.

It represents the opinion of the authors and not of the Commission. Clearly, however, it deals with a subject of utmost importance facing this Commission and all those who want a better waterfront for Toronto.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Cher collègue,

Je suis heureux de vous transmettre un exemplaire du rapport que m'a remis le groupe de travail sur les parcs, les distractions et les aménagements publics de la Commission royale sur l'avenir du secteur riverain de Toronto.

Ce rapport représente l'opinion de ses auteurs et n'engage pas la Commission. De toute évidence, toutefois, il concerne un sujet d'une très haute importance pour la Commission et pour tous ceux qui souhaitent que le secteur riverain de Toronto soit plus accueillant.

En espérant recevoir bientôt de vos nouvelles, je vous prie d'agréer, cher collègue, mes cordiales salutations.

David Crombie

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Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities

Report of the
Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities Work Group

Frontispiece
Nearly 200 years ago, William Pitt described his city's leafy parks as "the lungs of London". Today, many Torontonians feel as passionately about their waterfront, which they regard as the lifeblood of the Metro area.

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Work Group Members

Wojciech Wronski

Educated in economics and city planning at Oxford University and the University of London in the United Kingdom, Wojciech Wronski began his career in Canada as Planning Director for the City of Etobicoke. He became Deputy and then Commissioner of Planning for Metropolitan Toronto. After serving as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ontario Ministry of Housing and Executive Vice-President of the Urban Development Institute, he was appointed a Citizenship Court Judge by the Secretary of State.

Moiz Behar

Moiz Behar is a Toronto architect who practiced for a number of years in private architectural firms. In late 1987 he joined the City of Etobicoke as the City Architect, where he is currently establishing an architecture and urban design discipline within the Planning Department.

Brian Denney

Brian Denney is an engineer with the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. For the past 15 years, he has worked on all MTRCA's major waterfront projects and parks and is currently Manager of Engineering and Development.

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Educated in South Africa, Jack Diamond was Assistant Professor at the School of Architecture, University of Pennsylvania. After emigrating to Canada, he inaugurated and ran the Master of Architecture degree program at the University of Toronto and has been professor and visiting critic at many universities in Canada and the U.S. Since establishing his own firm in 1965, Mr Diamond has practised in North America, Europe, and the Middle East. He has written extensively on architecture and planning and serves on many boards.

Sally Gibson

Sally Gibson is a freelance writer, researcher, and author of *More Than An Island: A History of the Toronto Island*. She was research associate and later Associate Director of the Bureau of Municipal Research; while working towards her Ph.D. she was responsible for a variety of reports on urban issues for the City of Toronto.

Michael Hough

Michael Hough is one of Toronto's leading landscape architects and the founder and principal of the architecture/planning firm, Hough, Stansbury & Woodland Limited. He is a Fellow of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, winner of countless awards, and author of several reports and books.

Introduction

The Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities Work Group has had the enviable task of investigating ways to enhance Torontonians' enjoyment of their waterfront. While we believe that one of the great functions of an urban waterfront in today's world should be to provide diverse pleasures to a diverse population, creating "fun and enjoyment" is a serious business. Apart from the odd — sometimes very odd — flight of fancy, our Group tried to keep its collective nose to the grindstone in order to treat the important task at hand with the seriousness of purpose it deserves.

In one of his first acts as Commissioner, the Honourable David Crombie agreed to the organization of five work groups to prepare reports on the following general themes: Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities; Access and Movement; Environment and Health; Housing and Neighbourhoods; and Jobs, Opportunities, and Economic Growth. The mandate given to the work groups was "to summarize the current plans and initiatives in each of the thematic areas, to highlight the issues that require the attention of all levels of government if the Toronto waterfront is to achieve its highest potential and, particularly, to identify those new opportunities that could be pursued if there were greater co-ordination in the work of all governments and public authorities."

At the first meeting of all five work groups, the Commissioner instructed us "to dream the possible dream": to investigate what now is; to imagine what could be; and to suggest ways to get from here to there. Not an easy task, but an inspiring one.

We approached our work from a deliberately broad perspective. Assuming that different people have different concepts of fun and pleasure and public amenity, we cast our net wide. While our primary focus was on ways to protect, create, and/or properly develop parks and open spaces of all sizes and descriptions, we were interested in all manner of other pleasures andpublic amenities, including views, events, historic buildings, wildlife habitats, information kiosks, public art, or heated shelters.

Like the other work groups, we were also interested in how decisions regarding the waterfront are made at present and how the process might be improved. Average Torontonians probably don't care who is responsible for creating waterside parks and promenades, or redeveloping historic sites, or making sure that the water is clean, or accomplishing the

multitude of other tasks that create a pleasurable waterfront. They *do* care that these things are done — by someone. We need to remember this. While we, and the other work groups, were cognizant of jurisdictional issues so that we could recommend appropriate actions and policy initiatives, we could not be immobilized by them. The work of our Group, and of the Royal Commission generally, should be grounded in reality, but not short-circuited by supposed reality.

What is that institutional and jurisdictional reality? Neither all black nor all white. There have been a few significant attempts by various agencies over the years to take a comprehensive approach to planning the waterfront and bringing the lake back into the lives of Torontonians; most notably among them: the 1912 Waterfront Plan prepared and partly carried out by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners; the 1967 Waterfront Plan adopted by the Metropolitan Toronto Council; and the work of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority from 1970 onwards, which implemented and refined the 1967 plan and developed major waterfront parks from Marie Curtis Park in the western corner of Metro to the Lower Rouge in the eastern.

In spite of genuine efforts and, at times, spectacular results, serious problems have arisen that have undermined the ability of the current institutional arrangements to produce the best possible outcome. Sometimes the problems have been the result of conflicting institutional interests and that age-old phenomenon, "turf defence". Sometimes they have been the by-products of starkly different philosophies and ideas of "the good waterfront". Sometimes they have resulted from ignorance of what other waterfront agencies were doing or from a financial inability to translate good ideas into concrete (or grassy) reality.

Whatever the reasons, in recent years public outcry about the way the waterfront, especially the downtown Toronto waterfront, has been developing, and has become louder and louder. Clearly, this is an opportune moment to pause, take stock, and take appropriate action. The establishment of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront is most timely. Coupled with the establishment of an Intergovernmental Waterfront Committee, also chaired by Mr. Crombie, it gives real hope that something may now be done to grapple with the problems — real and perceived — and to lay the foundations for the Toronto waterfront of the 21st century.

In order to carry out our mandate from the Commission, the Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities Work Group did the following:

- compiled an inventory of existing recreational facilities along the Toronto waterfront, which the Group defined as stretching from Mississauga in the west to Ajax in the east;
- examined policies, plans, and projects currently in effect or under active consideration by various public agencies, private developers, and other waterfront interests;
- identified areas of present and potential policy conflicts, of competing land uses, and of expectations existing among the public agencies, private owners, and the public interested in the waterfront;
- identified new opportunities to improve public enjoyment of the waterfront, by building on current strengths and overcoming current weaknesses.

Because a great deal of material about the waterfront already exists and, in part, because of a tight deadline, we did not undertake any new research or institute any detailed planning studies of our own. We surveyed what exists, canvassed the ideas of the individual members — all of whom have been involved in different aspects of waterfront planning and development — and, where appropriate, we identified areas requiring further investigation at a later point in the Commission's work.

In addition to collecting and analysing public documents dealing with various aspects of the waterfront, we also interviewed senior officials from a variety of agencies actively involved in influencing waterfront decisions (see Appendix 3) and we solicited information from more than 50 other citizens' and professional groups interested in the future of the waterfront (see appendices 4 and 5).

This Report is the tangible fruit of this work, as well as of lengthy — sometimes heated — debate. It is divided into four major sections: historical context; sectoral analysis; general policy goals and implementation strategies; and conclusions.

While we take collective responsibility for the contents of our Report, different members took primary responsibility for producing different sections of it. The work for the Sectoral Analysis was shared among Moiz Behar (Etobicoke), Brian Denney (Mississauga, Western Beach, Tommy Thompson Park, Eastern Beach, Scarborough, and Pickering-Ajax) and Michael Hough (Central Waterfront). Sally Gibson was the author of the majority of the other sections. The appendices were put together, in the main, by our student assistant, Carole Donaldson. Jack Diamond contributed stimulating comments throughout. Our Chairman, Wojciech Wronski, provided overall guidance, rode herd, and made sure that we all produced on time. We hope our work becomes a useful springboard for future investigations and, more important, for future action to make Toronto's waterfront the best, and most pleasurable, waterfront possible.

Historical Context

The waterfront is Toronto's greatest recreational resource and, since earliest times, Torontonians have turned to the water in pursuit of pleasure. In the 1790s, Elizabeth Simcoe, the intrepid wife of Upper Canada's first Lieutenant-Governor, John Graves Simcoe, went often to her "favourite sands", as she fondly described the islands (or peninsula, as the islands then were). Like her contemporaries and generations of Torontonians after her, she went to picnic on the wild grasses, paddle (in a giant North West Company freight canoe) through the lagoons, and, in winter, dash across the bay bundled in a horse-drawn sleigh. She even rode across the bay in winter, which proved so risky she gave it up.

Other risks attended her explorations of the waterfront: rattlesnakes slithered beside the ancient Indian trail that hugged the shoreline through what is now Etobicoke, onward to the present City of Hamilton, and then to the Niagara.

Mrs. Simcoe was seasick when the waves of Humber Bay suddenly threatened to swamp her and her fragile vessel. But explore she did, and with great delight. One day in August 1793, she exulted in the "diversity of the Scene" she met as she rode past the wooded peninsula, walked along what is now the Eastern Beach, climbed into the surveyor's boat, and rowed eastward toward the "high lands of Toronto". She was so struck by the "extremely bold" shoreline and towering bluffs that she considered building a summer residence, which she planned to call "Scarborough". No residence was ever built there, but the name, of course, remained.

As the little town of York grew beside the water, its citizens continued to enjoy the many pleasures of lakeside living, as well as some of the drawbacks, such as filthy, stinking water that one early journalist described as "carrion broth", because of the dead animals and other horrors floating in it. Providing clean, clear water for citizens to drink and otherwise enjoy has proved to be a constant battle.

Some early residents, whose houses were strung out along what is now Front Street and was then the shoreline, enjoyed the breathtaking view that spread out, unimpeded, before them. Sometimes, what they saw took their breath away: in 1813, for example, the "Yankie fleet" was first spotted on the horizon, preparing to attack and take the town; in April of that year, it burned the vulnerable provincial capital. Most of the time, however, the view was a splendid attraction.

Toronto Bay was a focus of activity...both summer and winter

Picnic on the Toronto Islands in 1856.

Skating, carioling and cavorting on the Bay in the 1840s.

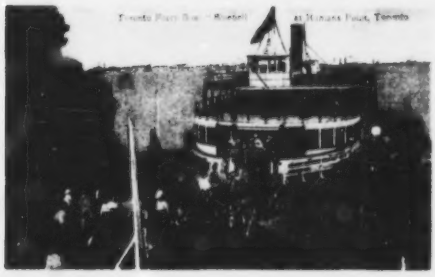
Even as the town grew back from the water, citizens continued to be fascinated by their lakeview. In 1818, Dr. William Warren Baldwin built the first homes named Spadina, atop a distant hill (adjacent to where Casa Loma now stands), where he cleared a section of forest so that he could still keep an eye on the bay.

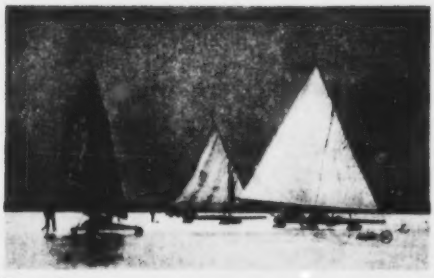
In the early 1830s, John George Howard, Toronto's first City Architect, began painting lively scenes of life on Toronto Bay, a habit he continued when he moved into his new home, Colbourne Lodge, perched on a knoll directly overlooking Humber Bay in what is now High Park. And in the 1870s, Dr. Henry Scadding, the first rector of Holy Trinity Church (now surrounded by the Eaton Centre), used to sit in his study on the top floor of the rectory, watching the harbour. Even in the early years of this century, citizens could stand on the steps of what is now Old City Hall and see the water at the foot of Bay Street. Toronto was still very much a waterfront city.

The harbour, of course, was a working harbour. But in the early days, people lived, worked, and played in a relatively small area and there were many waterside amusements. Sailing, rowing, fishing, and swimming were popular in the summer, as was promenading along the treed embankment that followed the shoreline. Skating, sledding, curling, and ice-boating were enjoyable pastimes when the bay froze over. Among the more unusual winter attractions were horse-racing and even fox-hunting across the slick icefields.

Torontonians also turned to the water to celebrate great public events. At Simcoe's "Naming of York" ceremony on 24 August 1793, soldiers, drawn up in ranks on the edge of the bay (about where Fort York now stands), fired a salute out over the water and the Governor's two tall ships, the *Mississaga* and the *Onondaga*, boomed a response. In 1860, the Prince of Wales' Royal Visit inspired 10,000 flag-waving spectators to cram into a temporary amphitheatre overlooking the water at the foot of John Street (near where the SkyDome now rises). When rowing champion Ned Hanlan returned to Toronto in triumph in 1879, he stood atop the pilot house of the steamer *Chicora* with a three-mile-long flotilla stretched out behind him and roaring crowds lining the shore's wharves and rooftops.

Despite the pall of the Great Depression, Torontonians celebrated their Centennial in 1934, lighting gigantic bonfires on the islands, cascades of fireworks pouring out over the dark lake.





Edwardian diversity

Amusement parks had sprung up along the water's edge as early as the 1840s, when the Privat brothers opened an amusement area, complete with merry-go-round, bowling alleys, a small zoo, and giant swings, next to their hotel at the "neck of the Peninsula", about where Ward's Island is today. Beginning in the 1880s, Hanlan's Point Amusement Park grew up around Ned Hanlan's picturesque hotel at the western end of the islands, near the present Island Airport. Earlier this century, such mainland waterfront amusement parks as Scarboro Beach and Sunnyside attracted thousands of thrill-seeking Torontonians. For many years, the waterfront and having fun were closely entwined in the public mind.

But as Toronto grew, so did the size and importance of the commercial port. Wharves were built (the first instances of lakefilling that altered the shoreline); shipping increased, and competition for limited harbour-side space increased accordingly. The Railway Age brought prosperity — and, in the 1850s, the first major southward extension of the shoreline, which began the process of cutting Torontonians off from the lake. Railway and industrial uses expanded dramatically in the latter part of the 19th, and the early part of the 20th, centuries, driving a widening industrialized wedge between the main part of the City and the water.

By 1913, the visiting poet Rupert Brooke lamented on a visit to Toronto that, although the city was situated on the shores of a "lovely lake ... you could never see that because the railways have occupied the entire lakefront. So if, at evening, you try to find your way to the edge of the water you are checked by a region of smoke, sheds, trucks, wharves, shorehouses, 'depots', railway lines, signals and locomotives, and trains that wander on the tracks up and down and across streets, pushing their way through pedestrians and tolling as they go ..."

Shortly before Rupert Brooke's visit, the newly created Toronto Harbour Commissioners (THC) issued its 1912 plan for a radical re-creation of the entire waterfront. By pushing recreational uses to the periphery, the THC was attempting to resolve the perceived fundamental conflict between commercial industrial use and public access and enjoyment. Sunnyside Amusement Park was built on lakefill in the west; the Toronto Islands were enlarged, but,fortunately, never linked to the mainland by bridge and highway, as proposed by the Commissioners; and ambitious, largely unrealized, recreation plans were made for a strip of parkland to the east that would be nearly five kilometres long and 305 metres wide.

The central waterfront, however, was devoted almost entirely to port and industrial uses. Over the next 15 years or so, it was filled and extended more than 300 metres to the south and devoted to waterfront industry, leaving the THC's own elegant waterfront headquarters high and dry amidst a vast area of railway lines. Ashbridge's Bay, Toronto's great marshland, was filled in to become a 405-hectare (1,001-acre) port and industrial area.

Pleasure-seekers determined to enjoy the frenetic action at Hanlan's Point or to relax under the spreading willows on Centre Island, could navigate their way across the tracks to catch a ferry at the foot of Yonge Street, but only at the risk of life and limb — sometimes all too-literally so.

The automobile and the elevated Gardiner Expressway virtually completed the barrier between the central city and the water. The elevated expressway was given the green light in 1954 and, by 1964, a sometimes 23-metre-high autoduct sliced across the waterfront, offering spectacular panoramas to automobile users, but less-than-enticing views to pedestrians struggling to find the water.

Moreover, the Gardiner parallels the ground-level Lakeshore Boulevard from about Bathurst Street to the Don River, and is connected to it by numerous ramps that help create the dark, confusing ground-level approach to the lake so often reviled today. Whatever its value as an efficient mover of cars and trucks, the Gardiner/Lakeshore Corridor was, and is, both a physical and a psychological barrier to enjoyment of the waterfront.

During the 1960s, Metro undertook a major waterfront planning effort, one of the few comprehensive examinations of significant stretches of the Toronto waterfront ever done. In 1967, Metro produced its plan, which shaped much of the shoreline development we now see in Scarborough and Etobicoke. However, the central waterfront, which was excluded from the plan, was the site, during the '60s of scattered but important changes. In 1968, the Province announced its intention of creating a waterfront showcase.

Over the next three years, the futuristic recreational complex of Ontario Place emerged on nearly 39 hectares (96 acres) of lakefill south of, but poorly related to, the now land-locked Exhibition Place. Harbour Square, a private high-rise develop-

ment composed of hotel, offices, and luxury apartments, rose, and is still rising, in massive proportions between York and Bay streets.

The THC began building the six-kilometre Outer Headland or Leslie Street Spit. Because the anticipated post-Seaway boom in water traffic never materialized, this has not been needed for port facilities, but has become, instead, an urban wilderness and the focus of still-unresolved controversy about just what kind of park it should become.

In 1972, the federal government suddenly announced that an 35-hectare (86-acre) waterfront park would be created between York Street and Stadium Road, south of the Gardiner. For all the recent controversy generated by the form of Harbourfront's development (too high, too dense, too commercial, too expensive, too tacky), it is worth recalling that, in 1972, the area was desolate, wind-swept, and uninviting; Harbourfront brought with it a dramatic reawakening of public interest in the present and future of the Toronto waterfront. Since then, imaginative and extensive programming (literally thousands of cultural and recreational activities have taken place at Harbourfront) has drawn a flood of visitors to a once-ignored part of the City.

Queen's Quay, the renovated Terminal Warehouse, which, in 1981, was the first major mixed-use development to open in Harbourfront, has generated admiring comments from many quarters, and drawn more visitors to the waterfront. Other residential developments — some more imaginative and publicly beneficial than others — have expanded into once-uninhabited waterfront areas. Serious problems remain to be resolved, but the picture is not an entirely negative one.

What the recent debates about Harbourfront and about the future of the waterfront demonstrate is that Torontonians care, and care passionately, about their waterfront. It is the obligation of this Royal Commission to pay heed to that concern. It is the particular task of the Parks, Pleasures, and Public Amenities Work Group to direct the Commission's attention to ways to increase Torontonians' enjoyment of their waterfront, not just in the central sector, which is experiencing such intense pressures for redevelopment, but across the entire Metro waterfront. If we succeed, Torontonians of diverse backgrounds will once again begin to associate the waterfront with fun and pleasures of all sorts.

Port Credit, July 1982.

Sectoral Analysis

In order to review the waterfront area between Mississauga and Ajax in detail, we have divided it into seven sectors: Mississauga; Etobicoke; Western Beach; Central; Eastern Beach; Scarborough; and Pickering/Ajax. Within each sector, geography, issues/conflicts, and recommendations/opportunities are analysed. The sectors are illustrated on a map at the end of the Report.

1. Mississauga Sector

The Mississauga waterfront stretches from Winston Churchill Boulevard in the west to Etobicoke in the east. Some of the industrial areas are in transition and the City is currently developing a new waterfront plan. The three key areas in the easterly part of the sector are Port Credit, Lakefront Promenade Park, and the Canada Post (the former Canadian Arsenals) property.

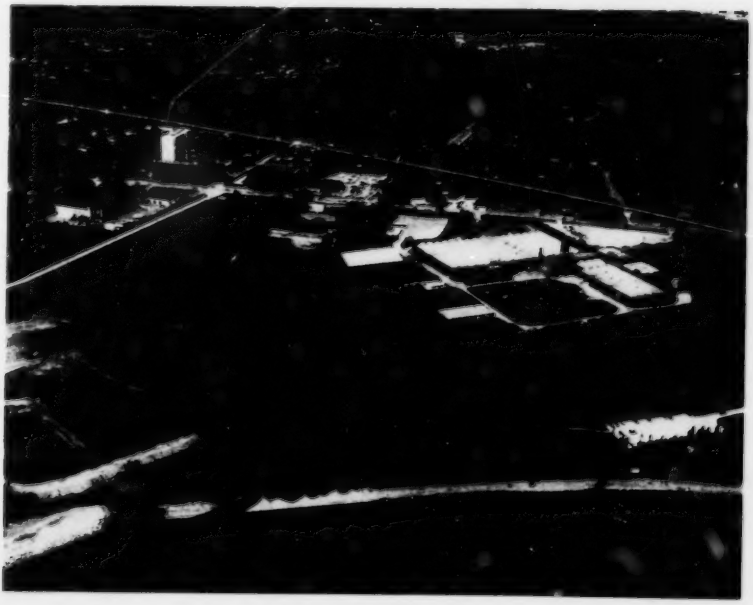
Port Credit is an urban waterfront and includes walks at the edge of the Credit River, a 900-slip marina, as well as J.C. Saddington and J.J. Plaus parks. Proposed developments include a new 375-slip marina; a charter-boat centre; a museum/theatre; a footbridge over the Credit River; and more housing and retail/commercial development.

In the spring of 1990, the Port Credit Yacht Club will relocate at Lakefront Promenade Park. The land now occupied by the Club is owned by the federal government and administered by the Small Craft Harbours Branch of Environment Canada, but is being sought by the City of Mississauga for redevelopment. New leases or purchase of the property may be required before the City can proceed with planned development.

The site of the Port Credit Marina is also owned by the federal government and, while the present lessee is interested in additional development, the current lease covers too short a time to justify substantial development.

Redevelopment of the Port Credit waterfront is an opportunity to provide an attractive and functional base of operations for rapidly growing charter boat operations. Such public amenities as a river's edge walk and landscaped open space can also be created. New residential and commercial spaces are planned as well. All of these elements of a vibrant waterfront community require co-operation between the federal

Lakefront Promenade Park (CVCA) Breakwall, March 1986.



Canadian Arsenals/Canada Post, June 1982

government and the City of Mississauga to ensure that the lands, most of which are federally owned, can be made available for public and private-sector investments.

The Lakefront Promenade Park is under construction. There are existing boat clubs; among proposed developments for the area are a new home for the Port Credit Yacht Club; public boat-launching ramps; a public marina; and manicured open space.

The Lakefront Promenade Park is an important link in the open space/recreation plan for the Mississauga waterfront, but development is stalled by a shortage of provincial funding of the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. Relatively modest public expenditures, combined with the planned investments by the Port Credit Yacht Club, could result in a spectacular waterfront activity centre.

The Canada Post site, formerly owned by Canadian Arsenals, comprises industrial buildings and woodland. Among the proposed developments: open space; a parking area for the suggested boat launching facility; and other plans now under review.

Canada Post is considering selling the old site and studies are under way to evaluate its use for residences. The 14.7 hectares that remain were originally part of a 145-hectare (358-acre) site that has been sold in various parcels to accommodate the Lakeview Sewage Treatment Plant, the Lakeview Generating Station, and several private businesses. A portion of the remaining land is being considered by the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority as an addition to Marie Curtis Park.

The constraints of the sewage treatment plant and generating station make the remainder of the Canada Post property unsuitable for use as a public amenity. The City of Mississauga, Canada Post, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA), and Metro Toronto have to assess their respective objectives for the property if this valuable area is to be publicly enjoyed as part of the Mississauga/Etobicoke waterfront.

Etobicoke Redevelopment

2. The Etobicoke Sector

Geographically, the Etobicoke waterfront stretches between the City of Mississauga and Etobicoke Creek in the west, and the City of Toronto and the Humber River in the east. While it is difficult to define a precise northern boundary, Lakeshore Boulevard acts as a continuous east-west delineator for the area. Four distinct neighbourhoods exist within the Etobicoke waterfront area: Long Branch; New Toronto; Mimico; Humber Bay.

A. Long Branch

The waterfront area of Long Branch comprises mostly single-family dwellings, a commercial/retail strip on Lakeshore Boulevard, and an industrial area north of Lakeshore Boulevard and around the CNR tracks.

The major park is 23-hectare (57-acre) Marie Curtis Park, which has such amenities as boating, softball, a wading pool, field games, picnic facilities, parking, and washrooms. Among the neighbourhood and community waterfront parks are 38th Street Park (0.17 hectare [0.42 acre]); Len Ford Park (0.8 hectare [2.0 acres]); Long Branch Park (1.33 hectares [3.29 acres]); and 28th Street Park (0.16 hectare [0.4 acre]). These parks are used mainly for passive recreation; some contain playgrounds and horticultural displays.

The commercial/retail strip on Lakeshore Boulevard needs upgrading and repair. Among proposed developments are recognition of parts of the Lakeshore Boulevard commercial/retail strip as Community Improvement Areas. A recently released consultant's report recommends improvements on Lakeshore Boulevard, as well as medium-density housing development and some open space in the Skeen's Lane area, where the City of Long Branch is assembling land.

Because most of the waterfront at Long Branch is single-lot privately owned residential property, public open space is limited to the five existing parks, all used primarily for such passive recreation as fishing and picnicking. The boat-launching facilities at Marie Curtis Park are extensively used and in need of improvement. All five parks are being used beyond capacity; clearly, the community needs additional public recreational open space.

Marie Curtis, June 1982.

Long Branch (Lake Promenade), October 1983.

There is a lack of interconnection between the parks along the waterfront, as well as a general lack of well defined connections between the parks and the main commercial/retail area to the north.

Among the recommendations/opportunities for Long Branch:

- improving the boat-launching facilities at Marie Curtis Park;
- establishing well articulated connections between Marie Curtis and Long Branch parks, preferably along the waterfront; improving pedestrian connections between the commercial/retail spine at Lakeshore Boulevard and the waterfront;
- giving priority to acquiring individual lakefront properties as they come on the market, for public park purposes; considering whether to add fill to existing waterfront parks in order to expand their size.

B. New Toronto

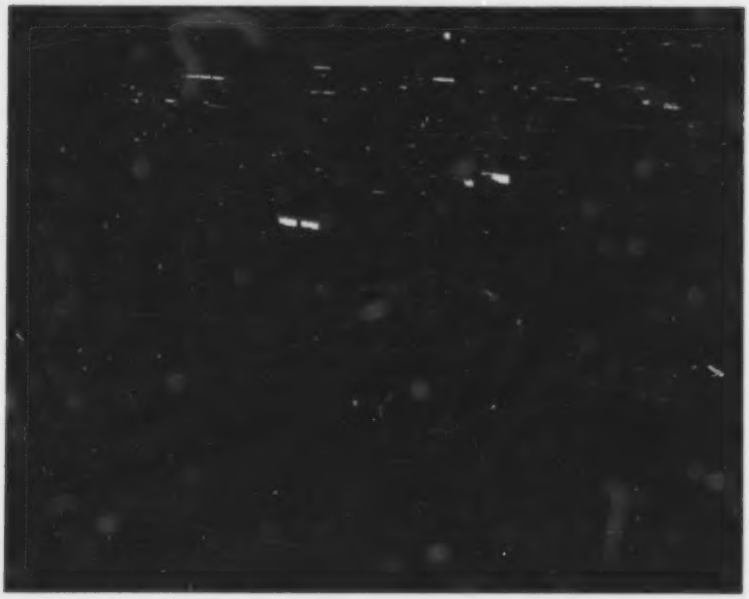
Low-rise residential and single-family dwellings make up a large part of the area south of Lakeshore Boulevard, which is the main commercial/retail strip. Most industry is located north of Lakeshore Boulevard.

The former Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital property, the Humber College South Campus, the filtration plant, and Colonel Samuel Smith Park occupy a total of approximately 73 hectares (180 acres) of land south of Lakeshore Boulevard. The MTRCA's waterfront park, Col. Samuel Smith Park, occupies 23.2 hectares (57.3 acres); neighbourhood and community waterfront parks include Rotary Park (2.85 hectares [7.04 acres]), which has a softball diamond, swimming pool, tennis courts, wading pool, and playground. Prince of Wales Park has artificial ice rinks, a wading pool, and a playground.

Landfilling is currently taking place at Col. Samuel Smith Park; when it has been completed, the park will become an integral part of the existing MTRCA park to its immediate north. It will have passive recreational open space, marina facilities, washrooms, and parking.

A joint study recently commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Government Services and Humber College offered three possible redevelopment plans, which included between

New Toronto (Prince of Wales Park), December 1983.



Colonel Samuel Smith, December 1988

1,800 and 2,300 housing units and 2.8 to 3.8 hectares (6.9 to 9.4 acres) of open space on 20 hectares (49 acres) of land, (of which the Ministry owns 12.8 hectares [31.6 acres]).

Several proposals have been discussed for the under-utilized 10-hectare (25-acre) Goodyear site on the north side of Lakeshore Boulevard; the majority involve large-scale housing developments and some open space.

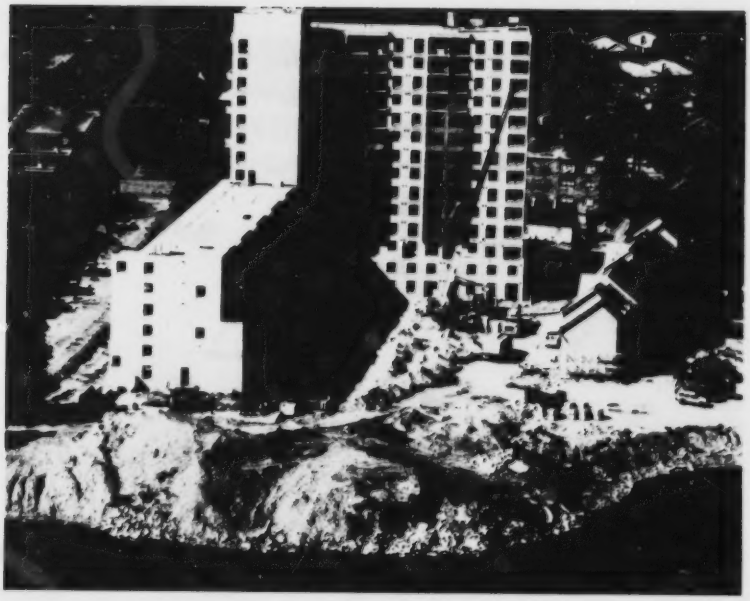
The major waterfront land assembly in New Toronto is taking place south of Lakeshore Boulevard between 23rd and 13th streets on land owned by the Ontario Ministry of Government Services, the MTRCA, Metro Toronto, and Humber College.

A recently commissioned study by the Ministry and the College, *The Lakeshore Neighbourhood*, proposes middle- and low-rise apartments, townhouses, a hotel/residential complex, and retention of the eight historic cottages and administration building, which will be used by Humber College.

One of the most significant issues is whether a major portion of the land in this assembly should be developed for uses other than public open space and parkland; the Ontario Ministry of Government Services has indicated the need for housing on the site. Related to the issue is the extension of Kipling Avenue from Lakeshore Boulevard to Col. Samuel Smith Park on the lakefront.

Recommendations/opportunities for New Toronto:

- ensuring that the scale of the Lakeshore Neighbourhood development, especially as it nears the waterfront, meets the needs of pedestrians and that siting and densities minimize intrusions into existing and future park land;
- improving general accessibility to Lakeshore Boulevard by extending Kipling Avenue south;
- making all or portions of the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital's historic buildings available for public use;
- reviewing the possibility of connecting Colonel Samuel Smith and Marie Curtis parks in the west and Humber Bay Park in the east.



Mimico (Summerhill Road), September 1988.

Mimico, April 1986.

C. Mimico

A large portion of the westerly part of Mimico south of Lakeshore Boulevard is made up of low-rise single family dwellings. The eastern portion, however, includes an apartment strip that covers 13.78 hectares (34.05 acres) and contains 2,145 rental units. Most buildings are low-rise brick structures built close to Lakeshore Boulevard, that block any view of the waterfront.

There are no regional waterfront parks in Mimico, but there are three neighbourhood and community waterfront parks: Norris (0.44 hectares [1.09 acres]); Amos Waites (0.92 hectares [2.27 acres]); and Superior (0.48 hectares [1.19 acres]). Amos Waites has a swimming pool, beach, playground, and community centre. Superior includes a field-games area, playground, and horticultural display. Norris Park has open space and a playground.

The Mimico Housing Co-operative at Summerhill Road, which contains 153 apartment units and 19 townhouses, has dedicated a 7.5 m strip along the waterfront for public use and given a public access easement through the site.

The Mimico neighbourhood is singled out as the most deficient in parkland in the Etobicoke waterfront; it is estimated that an additional 10 hectares (25 acres)of community parkland are required in Mimico, five of them south of Lakeshore Boulevard between Royal York Road and Park Lawn Road.

Another major problem is Amos Waites Park, which is used beyond its capacity, now providing more recreational facilities than any other park in Mimico.

In 1983, *The Mimico Study*, prepared by the Etobicoke Planning Department, and adopted by Etobicoke Council, recommended that the City encourage and permit redevelopment of portions of the Mimico apartment strip now being used below permissible density levels. Many of the existing buildings are not sited, landscaped, or designed to take advantage of the waterfront location; most have surface parking lots close to the water.

According to the study, the apartment strip is in need of neighbourhood parkland; Humber Bay Park is close, but not close enough for that purpose. The study recommended that the 51 waterlots in the apartment strip, with 18 different owners, be added to park facilities and used for a boardwalk or other

Humber Bay Waterfront Area, June 1988.

recreational purposes. Providing a continuous boardwalk across the waterfront would be a factor, on a site-specific basis, in permitting an increased Floor Space Index (FSI). In addition, property owners who redeveloped land would meet part of the open space requirements by dedicating their waterlots to the City.

Recommendations/opportunities for Mimico:

- connecting Amos Waites and Superior parks to the boardwalk/open space immediately east of the apartment strip and through Humber Bay Park to the motel strip and the future Seaquarium;
- linking Amos Waites and Norris parks as an extension of the waterfront park westward;
- reinforcing pedestrian links between the Mimico waterfront and the Lakeshore Boulevard commercial strip, particularly near Amos Waites and Superior parks;
- exploring a mid-block pedestrian connection to the future waterfront park, near the foot of Burlington Street;
- studying existing access routes in Humber Bay Park West, across the west harbour to Superior Avenue, and from Humber Bay Park West, across Mimico Creek, to the planned ring road;
- creating a regional waterfront park at the foot of Royal York Road.

D. Humber Bay

Humber Bay Park, in combination with Mimico Creek Valley, has considerable passive recreational open space, while the area north of Lakeshore Boulevard is mainly industrial. South of Lakeshore is the motel strip, comprising more than 20 hectares (49 acres), which, in addition to motels, has some family dwellings.

The regional waterfront park, Humber Bay, consists of Humber Bay East and Humber Bay West, a total of 40 hectares (99 acres) that includes two sailing and cruising clubs, a sailing school,boat-launching facilities, public open space, urban wildlife habitats, a public shelter, and parking. The neighbourhood waterfront park, Palace Pier, occupies less than one hectare (approximately two acres).

Large land parcels in the area are being assembled for private redevelopment. The City's Official Plan Amendment C-65-86 (revised February 1988), outlines rules for the future development of the motel strip.

Two new luxury condominium projects are under construction west of Mimico Creek. The two projects are on 7.12 hectares (17.59 acres) of land and will contain approximately 1,210 high-rise units and 50 townhouses. A lakefront boardwalk and public open space are included in both projects, as well as 13,000 square metres of commercial space along Lakeshore Boulevard.

One luxury high-rise condo development (in the motel strip) has obtained City Council approval; known as the Newport Condominiums, it will contain 168 units and provide a lakefront promenade and public open space.

The proposal for Palace Place, adjacent to the Humber River, will contain 522 high-rise units. Last summer, plans for a mixed-use development on eight hectares (20 acres) of land in the motel strip were announced. The Seaquarium Corporation recently chose the northerly section of Humber Bay Park East as the site of a 12,000 square metre seaquarium.

The Humber Bay neighbourhood is in transition. Official Plan Amendment No. C-65-86 would allow inter-related mixed-use development south of Lakeshore Boulevard, between Mimico Creek and the Humber River.

The amendment establishes a general framework that acknowledges the exceptional qualities of the location; it permits as much as 165 units-per-hectare (408 units-per-acre) gross site density and provides for density transfers if land is dedicated for a proposed internal road, parks, and/or public facilities.

It also provides for turning over waterlots to the MTRCA.

On the motel strip, there is a minimum requirement that one-half to one hectare be dedicated as parkland for each 300 residential units and that two percent of commercial land be similarly dedicated. It is expected that the Plan Amendment will produce a total of no less than 5.5 hectares (13.6 acres) for new parkland. Some owners of properties in the motel

strip have objected to the allotted densities, the proposed ing road, and the plans for acquiring land for parks and related purposes.

Its location on the water is the essential amenity of the motel strip area; creating a link along the public open spaces at the water's edge is, therefore, a major objective. It is intended that the public waterfront promenade will be linked across the Humber River to Sunnyside and Casimir Gzowski parks, and across Mimico Creek.

A pedestrian link and public open space that joins Lakeshore Boulevard to the waterfront is also important if physical, as well as visual, access to the lake is to be guaranteed. At present, there are no well articulated connections between the Humber Bay Park and the Mimico Creek Valley system.

The City of Etobicoke and the MTRCA have proposed lakefilling to create open space, public amenities, and a marina. The motel strip plan says there is a need for a public attraction that will be a year-round focus of the waterfront park/open space system; the recent announcement that the Seaquarium will be located at Humber Bay Park East will provide such a focus.

Recommendations/opportunities for Humber Bay:

- Official Plan Amendment C-65-86 (revised February 1988) sets a general framework within which it is possible to create continuous public space at the motel strip waterfront; the framework should be followed and, if necessary, expanded to ensure there is as much public space as possible;
- any plan to develop the motel strip should be considered carefully to ensure that the height, massing, use, siting, and design of buildings emphasize the waterfront; in general, high-rises should not be situated near the waterfront;
- publicly held lands on the motel strip should be used to achieve public space objectives in the area;
- in order to ensure that people using the open space at the waterfront do not feel they are trespassing on private property, public open space should be clearly identified as such; the proposed ring road in the motel strip might be one way of delineating public space;

Western Beanches, July 1988.

- a pedestrian link/open space/park should be provided to join the lakefront with Lakeshore Boulevard and enable physical access to the water;
- access to the waterfront at the motel strip should be available 24 hours a day;
- a more urban open space could be created along the motel strip to contrast with and complement the passive recreational qualities of Humber Bay Park;
- the Seaquarium should be an integral part of the open space at the motel strip;
- in future, the boardwalk at the motel strip should be linked to the apartment strip in Mimico and across the Humber River to City of Toronto parks.

Finally, in considering issues of importance to Etobicoke, it should be noted that a review of the Metro Toronto waterfront showed that various issues, common to most communities in the area, were of little relevance to the City of Etobicoke. For example, while there are few of the disputes about jurisdictional overlapping or conflict among different levels of government that concern other municipalities, the major issues in Etobicoke are ease of waterfront access and the quality of the waterfront experience.

3. Western Beaches Sector

This sector of the waterfront lies between the mouth of the Humber River and Ontario Place; the area, which was given its present form by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners as part of the 1912 Waterfront Plan, has a long history of public use. Lakeshore Boulevard and the Gardiner Expressway form the northern boundary of this open space and narrow linear park, and make connections to the adjacent residential communities very difficult.

Among existing facilities are playgrounds; a swimming pool; monuments; a historic bathing pavilion; beach; parking lots; the Martin Goodman Trail; a rowing and sailing club; the Palais Royale; and sections of protected waterway.

A new plan for parks is proposed this year, and consideration is being given to relocating Lakeshore Boulevard, in order to gain 14 acres of open space. The MTRCA proposes building a new swimming facility and other improvements. A rowing course, which would be required for the Olympics, would provide new recreational opportunities but there might be a negative impact on water quality and the view.

There are several constraints to using the various local amenities: water quality behind the Western Beach breakwater precludes swimming for much of each summer as the result of water flowing from the Humber River and from storm sewers; usable park space is limited by heavy traffic on adjacent Lakeshore Boulevard. Links to the west, over the Humber River, connecting to the Humber Valley path system, are difficult (because the only crossings are vehicular bridges — no place for bikes or pedestrians), while pedestrian links to High Park and to the Parkdale community are difficult and uninviting. The large number of waterfowl dirty the turf areas and pathways and restrict their use; and lack of access and parking at the Palais Royale further constrain use. Wave action, particularly during high-water periods, has damaged boats and the Boulevard Club building.

The rowing course needed if the 1996 Olympics take place in Toronto could provide additional open space, a cleaner beach area, and a protected waterway for small craft; however, there are concerns about water quality and the potential impact of such a course on the view.

Despite its various limitations, the area has a long history of extensive public use and ways must be found to improve its quality and use. Many opportunities exist to do so.

Opportunities/recommendationsfor Western Beaches:

The historical significance of the mouth of the Humber River should be emphasized by providing appropriate displays and support facilities, as suggested in the MTRCA plan for the area.

Improved links for the Martin Goodman Trail over the Humber River to Etobicoke may be possible when the Gardiner Expressway bridges are replaced.

Pathway systems should be improved and moved closer to the lake, which would separate them more from traffic on

Lakeshore Boulevard. Lakeshore Boulevard itself should remain substantially as it is, though landscaping of the wide medians could be improved; care should be taken to protect the view from the roadway.

Additional parking should be provided for the Palais Royale. The existing median of Lakeshore Boulevard could be used as a carefully screened parking area.

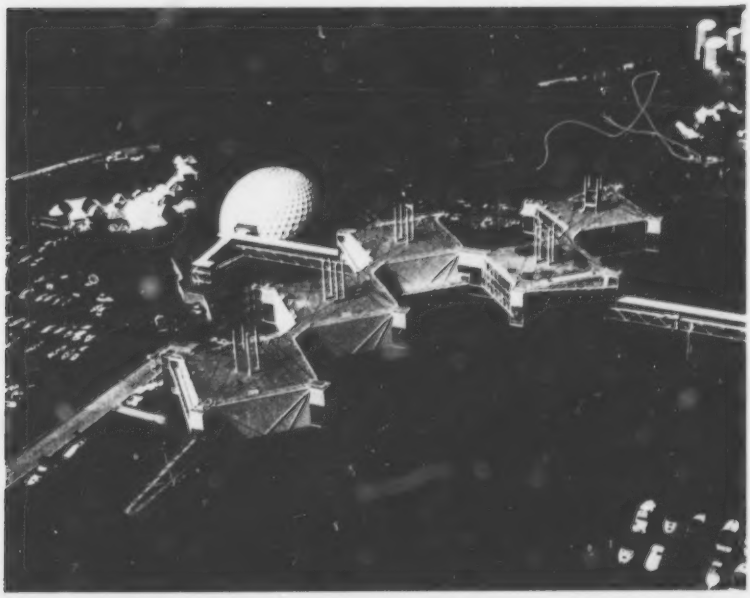
The Western Beach area should have at least one good, family swimming area. The likelihood of improving water quality so that it is fit for swimming, using the existing configuration, is not good.

While attempts to improve the water quality of the lake should be made, there are two options for swimming facilities: one is the so-called modified pool, adjacent to the existing Sunnyside Pavilion and pool, as shown in the MTRCA's master plan for the western beaches. The second is an artificial beach, as shown in the MTRCA plan and in other schemes for an Olympic rowing course adjacent to the existing breakwater.

Despite concerns about the effect of an Olympic rowing course, the land configuration needed could create new open spaces and a view somewhat removed from the nearby transportation corridor; furthermore, the waterway that resulted could provide opportunities for small craft not available on larger bodies of water. The site's proximity to downtown redevelopment and therefore to high volumes of fill means that a large area could be created within a short time. The concept is worthy of further investigation.

Using the opportunities we've described in the Western Beach would require co-operation among the City of Toronto, Metro Toronto, the Province of Ontario, the MTRCA, Ontario Place, the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, the Toronto Ontario Olympic Council , and various lessees and user groups.

Exhibition Place, June 1988.



Ontario Place, November 1988.

4. The Central Sector

The central section of the waterfront is its oldest and most varied, and includes Exhibition Place/Ontario Place, Fort York, the Toronto Islands, Harbourfront, the Central and East Bayfront of the Inner Harbour, and the Port Industrial Area. The shoreline of a highly urbanized city contrasts with the Toronto Islands, from which it is separated by the Inner Harbour and which sets it apart from other waterfronts on the Great Lakes.

The development of the area as a port, which began in 1912 under the jurisdiction of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, has made it a historic and working port. The Toronto Islands, now under the jurisdiction of Metro Toronto, were, from the community's earliest days, a place for recreation, residential communities, and natural environments, reached only by boat.

Harbourfront, under federal jurisdiction, was created in 1972 and developed as "The City on the Water", an area of programmed urban activity, cultural events, commerce, housing, and historic industrial buildings.

To the east, Tommy Thompson Park evolved from a 1959 Toronto Harbour Commissioners plan to create a new port facility; instead, it became a spectacular urban wilderness filled with unique species of plants and wildlife of local significance.

In its entirety, the central waterfront is a mosaic offering diverse activities and opportunities. We focussed on the public or private agencies that control recreational resources, the predominant character of each within the larger waterfront picture, the type of facilities and open spaces that currently exist, and future plans for these places.

A. Exhibition Place

Exhibition Place is used primarily for fairs, trade shows, and sports and entertainment events. These include the Royal Winter Fair and the annual Canadian National Exhibition and its amusement rides. In addition, there are trade and commercial shows, a marine museum, historic buildings, the site of Fort Rouille, and parking lots.

Among proposals for the area: an international centre of 70,000 square metres, combined with ancillary buildings at the east end to create a 140,000 square metre facility. The Board has approved a call for proposals from the development industry to finance and build the centre. There is a plan to refurbish the Music Building in order to present concerts there in future.

Among the studies and proposals: a 1982 evaluation of Exhibition Place by the Province, Metro, and the City of Toronto; a 1984 study of siting a domed stadium at Exhibition Place. A Metro study of its future said that Exhibition Place should be retained as a recreational facility, as an amateur sports centre, as a site for cultural entertainment (on the west third of the place), and as a major park.

The current bid being made for the 1996 Olympics by the Toronto Ontario Olympic Council includes building a new track-and-field stadium, housing, and rowing courses on the Exhibition Place grounds and waterfront.

Among the major conflicts and issues related to Exhibition Place, the first is that the recreational potential of the site is not being realized. Strategically located in the waterfront area, it attracts visitors for specific events, but remains under-used much of the time. It often seems to be an island of buildings within a sea of parking lots and roads. Current plans would not seem to remedy that perception, nor would they provide links to other parts of the City or create a much-needed park.

Second, there are no connections — in programming, finance, or administration — between Exhibition Place and Ontario Place, which should work together as a recreational area. It is unclear whether the problem is because of conflicting ideologies in planning or differences of opinion on the functions and roles of the two facilities.

The third issue relates to Toronto's bid for the 1996 Olympic games, which stresses major changes in the stadium and waterfront areas. Should the bid be successful, it will have an impact on current planning and development of Exhibition Place, and on the waterfront as a whole.

The proposal for a World Fair in Toronto would involve similarly radical changes to Exhibition Place/Ontario Place. The chance of reaping environmental, economic, and other benefits — during the Fair and after — will be a factor in evaluating the plan.

B. Ontario Place

Ontario Place has a strong water-related character and is used for cultural events; existing commercial facilities include concessions, restaurants, and a beer garden. For those seeking entertainment, there are the Ontario North theme rides and exhibits; the water slide;the Forum where dance performances and concerts are presented, and Cinesphere. There is a children's village and a 320-boat marina.

Not all development proposals have been revealed but, among those that are known, there is a suggestion for replacing Ontario North with amusement rides and modifying Ontario Place itself if the Olympics or a World Fair are going to be staged in Toronto.

Regional and provincial interests at Ontario Place often appear to be in conflict when money is spent to promote programs in isolation from other waterfront facilities and jurisdictions. This is true of Ontario Place, which is an independent provincial corporation, as it relates to Exhibition Place. There is concern that Ontario Place will continue to lose its role as a site for cultural recreation and will become little more than theme park entertainment.

Ontario Place's identity — is it a semi-private facility with entrance fees and restricted winter access, or a freely accessible public place? — remains an issue.

C. Fort York

Fort York is a military fort, site of battles in the War of 1812. In addition to its historic designation by the Province of Ontario, Fort York has been singled out by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, which has identified it as a place of national historic importance. The Toronto Historical Board has proposed a $4-million to $6-million redevelopment of Fort York.

Fort York

Toronto Islands, July 1988

A historic site, important to the waterfront and to the City's and the country's past, Fort York nonetheless remains almost totally isolated and inaccessible. Better links are urgently needed to the waterfront, Exhibition Place, and other parts of the City. The view of the City from the Fort is crucial to the site's historic symbolism.

D. The Toronto Islands

The Toronto Islands are a regional park, accessible only by ferry. The facilities include two restaurants and fast-food outlets, as well as amusement rides, a children's farm, bicycling paths, boat rentals, tennis courts, picnic areas, marinas, and private yacht clubs, as well as beaches and swimming facilities.

There is a residential community comprising 250 houses on Wards and Algonquin islands and a natural area on Mugg's Island, which is accessible by permit only; the Toronto Island Nature School offers a variety of recreational opportunities. Historic buildings include a lighthouse built in 1808 and St. Andrews-by-the-Lake Church, 1884.

Metro Toronto Parks and Property Department is in the process of implementing a ten-year plan for the islands; the City of Toronto proposes that, with minor modifications, they be left as they are.

With a million summer visitors annually, winter recreation at the Toronto Islands is minimal. There should be no further erosion of the islands' natural areas, which are evidence of their natural evolution and are of interest to naturalists.

E. Harbourfront

Harbourfront is a diverse urban area, with a mix of activities and programs available, among them music presentations, art galleries, a theatre, and educational events. Recreational facilities include marinas, a boating school, urban squares, a waterfront promenade, and opportunities for winter activities. There is a park for the disabled and a mix of non-profit, rental, and condominium residential properties.

The Harbourfront 2000 plan envisages better east-west and north-south access; sheltered walkways; protected open spaces in winter; a Cousteau Centre; and more public programming.

Harbourfront, September 1988

Central Bayfront, September 1988.

The plan calls for more mixed and lively recreational/ commercial and educational uses in Harbourfront's highly urban context.

While there has been much criticism of some of Harbourfront's building development, its success in cultural and recreational programming is widely recognized. This and its character as an urban experience in a waterfront setting provide a stimulating environment for enjoyment. Thus, the present conflicts between Harbourfront's objectives for open space and those of the City are unfortunate. While agreement with the City of Toronto has been reached on 12.95 hectares (32 acres) of open space in Harbourfront, there remains a divergence of views between the City and Harbourfront on the *amount* of open space that should be provided versus its quality and special nature as a lively, urban environment. There is continuing debate on the location and type of another 3.24 hectares (8 acres).

F. The Central Bayfront

The Central Bayfront is filled with high-density residential and office towers. There are ferry docks in the area, as well as a waterfront City park, the Harbour Castle Hotel and its convention facilities, and some vacant land. There are plans for a City park that would be linked to Harbourfront and for a protected promenade, seven metres in width. Marine Terminal 27 has been sold for private redevelopment.

G. The East Bayfront

The East Bayfront is an industrial area including the historic Redpath Refinery (which includes the Redpath Sugar Museum), marine terminals 28 and 29, the Queen's Quay Racquet Club, and parking lots for those visiting the Toronto Islands.

The plan of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners proposes mixed industrial business and studio uses, while the Central Waterfront Plan of March 1984 suggests that the area be used for general industrial purposes.

East Bayfront, September 1988.

Port Industrial Area, June 1988.

Views of the waterfront in both the Central and East Bayfront areas have been blocked by private development, while pedestrian access is impeded by industry and fast-moving traffic to and from government-owned lands including the Ontario Liquor Control Board, Ontario Provincial Police, and the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. The Harbour Square public park is separated visually from Queen's Quay and is, consequently, hard to reach. Redevelopment should ensure visual and physical access to the waterfront.

H. The Port Industrial Area

The Port Industrial Area is in transition: shipping, heavy industry, scrap metal, salt, and coal companies and, however unintentionally, a diverse landscape and a high degree of informality characterize it. Among existing facilities are Cherry Beach, three yacht clubs on the north shore, allotment gardens, and such small parks as the Polson Street Parkette.

The Toronto Harbour Commissioners' plan for the Port includes job-related industry, a Port-area business and retail park; around-the-clock shipping and navigation; integration of open space with the industrial Port; a continuous park along the north shore, linked to Tommy Thompson Park and an open space link to the Don Valley and the Central Bayfront systems; a 1,100-boat marina at the base of Tommy Thompson Park; marina parking; and a proposed Olympic Village.

While the Toronto Harbour Commissioners (THC) collaborate, as a matter of course, with the City and other agencies in planning the Port Industrial Area, it is not required to do so. Therefore, there is still the potential of competing objectives as future plans evolve.

I. Tommy Thompson Park

Tommy Thompson Park on the Leslie Street Spit is an untamed urban area with controlled access, an interpretive centre, a boating club, and opportunities to view wildlife in a natural habitat. Plans call for an education program; development of wetlands; boardsailing; trail development; links to the Martin Goodman Trail; protection of the nesting area; and limiting access to the Park.

Tommy Thompson Park, December 1988.

Ashbridge's Bay, July 1988.

There is potential for conflict between the proposed THC marina and the integrity of Tommy Thompson Park. Increased boating traffic close to nesting areas may disturb wildlife and additional vehicular traffic on Leslie Street concerns some park users.

It will take several years for the Toronto Harbour Commissioners to armour the shoreline as underwater slopes mature. Over several decades, three areas enclosed by dikes will be required to dispose of dredged material from various locations within the Port.

The MTRCA's plan for Tommy Thompson Park is subject to approval under the provincial Environmental Assessment Act. While the plan would control vehicular access, there is still concern about the extent of vehicular penetration into the park.

Retaining the existing boating club and accommodating other boating and windsurfing clubs from the north shore of the Outer Harbour will require vehicular access and some additional lakefilling.

Safe public use of the area will require improvements to trails, and this, according to some people, conflicts with the natural life on the site.

5. Eastern Beaches Sector

This stretches from Ashbridge's Bay Park in the west to the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant in the east. It includes a popular mix of open space, beaches, boating facilities, and a boardwalk. The northerly boundary is Lakeshore Boulevard in the west and the Beach residential area east of Woodbine Avenue. The interface between the waterfront park and the residential area is perhaps the most attractive and successful of any on the waterfront. The Eastern Beach is divided into five park areas: Ashbridge's Bay; Woodbine Beach; Beaches Park; Kew Gardens; Balmy Beach.

Woodbine Beach, Eastern Beaches (looking east), July 1988.

Beaches Park, Eastern Beaches (looking east), July 1988.

A. Ashbridge's Bay

Ashbridge's Bay is predominantly a park with pathways, picnic areas, a boardwalk, a parking lot, launching ramps, mooring docks by the day, boating clubs, a beach for swimming, and boardsailing. Aside from improvements to the harbour entrance, the area is expected to stay as it is.

B. Woodbine Beach

Woodbine Beach is open for public swimming and includes a change house; boardwalk; shade trees; and the Don Summerville Pool. The beach is expected to be left as is.

C. Beaches Park

Beaches Park includes a beach for swimming; a boardwalk; shady areas; and the Metro Police Marine Unit. Improvements to the beach and control of sewer overflows have been proposed.

D. Kew Gardens

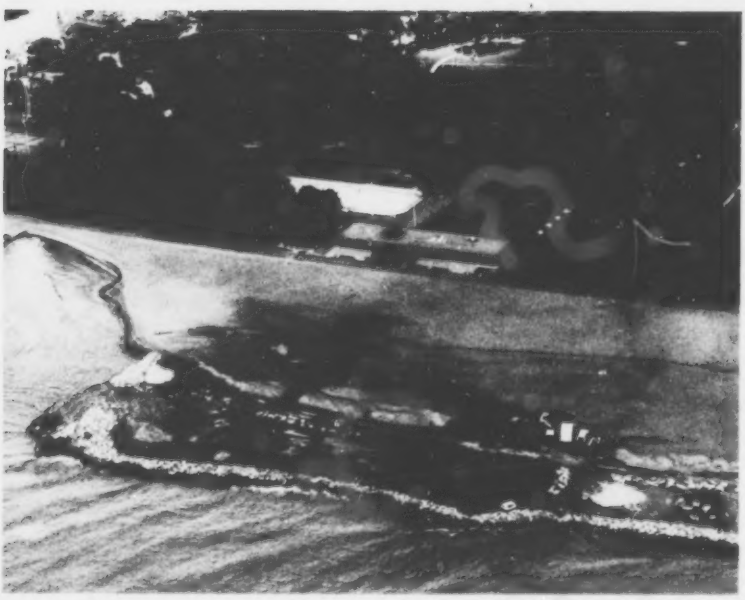
Kew Gardens is a well landscaped park that includes floral gardens, tennis courts, and shade trees. There are no plans for any changes.

E. Balmy Beach

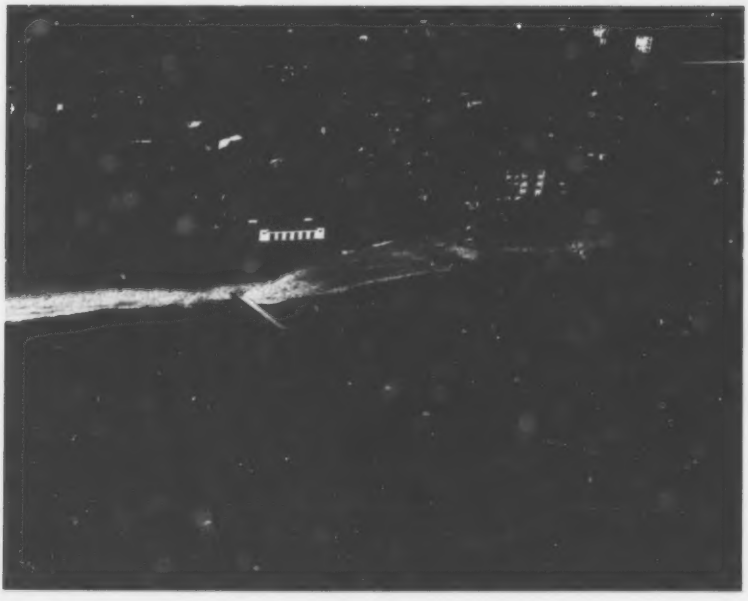
Balmy Beach includes a beach for swimming, a change house, and boardwalk. No changes are being planned.

The specific issues affecting the parks in the Eastern Beaches Sector include:

- water quality that is often considered unsafe for swimming, particularly in the summer rainfall. Although huge expenditures on sewer separation and other controls are under way or planned, water quality may not consistently meet public health standards;



Kew Gardens, September 1988



Balmy Beach, December 1987.

- inadequate parking on weekends and parking by outsiders on residential streets that causes conflict with residents;
- the need for artificially nourished sand, particularly when the lake's level is high, because erosion of the Bluff has diminished the supply of sand to the east and it will be further reduced by shoreline protection programs in Scarborough.

Recommendations/opportunities:

- ongoing sewer separation projects and other water quality improvement projects must be monitored for effectiveness in achieving water-quality objectives for swimming beaches;
- the MTRCA should obtain funding to monitor shoreline processes and the maintenance of sand supply needed for beach stability.

6. Scarborough Sector

The Scarborough sector begins at the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant in the west and extends to the mouth of the Rouge River. Kingston Road is the northern boundary of the waterfront zone throughout most of the sector. The dramatic Scarborough Bluffs dominate most of the shoreline and restrict access to the shoreline. They do, however, offer a spectacular view from those few places where access is available. There are eight key locations in this sector: Rosetta McClain Gardens; Scarborough Heights Park; Bluffer's; the Guild Inn; East Point Park; Highland Creek Marsh; Port Union; and the Rouge Marsh.

A. Rosetta McClain Gardens

Rosetta McClain Gardens comprise a formal park featuring floral gardens; a good view of the lake; a walkway; a parking lot; and access for the handicapped. Further development of the gardens, a pedestrian link to the shoreline and a link to Scarborough Heights Park along the top of the Bluffs have been proposed.

From Scarborough Bluffs

Rosetta McClain Park, June 1988.

B. Scarborough Heights Park

Scarborough Heights Park has a good view of the lake and a parking area. It has been suggested that a pedestrian link to the shoreline be developed through the ravine.

C. Bluffer's Park

Bluffer's Park is an actively used urban regional park and a focal point of the City of Scarborough's waterfront. It contains a meadow area on its toplands; a good view of the lake and the bluffs themselves; picnic areas; launching ramps for boats; four boating clubs; a marina and restaurant; a beach for swimming; a Metro Police Marine Unit; and is a key spot for salmon fishing.

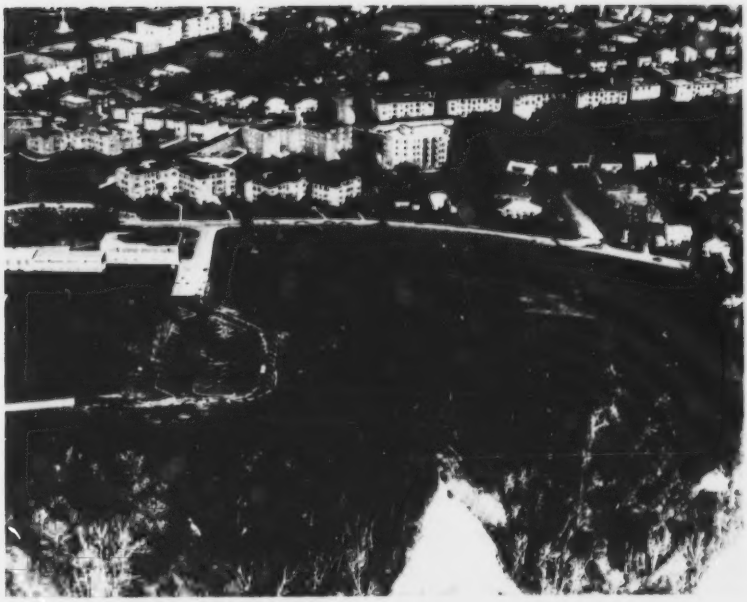
Among proposed developments: shoreline trails to the east; a boat-repair facility; access via the topland; a pedestrian link through the Brimley Road Ravine.

In examining the context and issues in the area, it is necessary to keep in mind that western Scarborough has few places with public access to the shoreline or to the top of the Bluffs; the few existing access points are surrounded by single-family dwellings that preclude regional use. The concentration of activity at Bluffer's Park, where there is access, leads to problems of overcrowding. The growth in recreational fishing at the Park has so dominated it at some times of the year that other kinds of visitors have been unable to use it.

There is additional parkland, owned for more than a decade by the MTRCA, south of Cardinal Newman School. Access, however, is limited and can be improved only by construction of a road and parking area off Brimley Road. Agreement for doing so would be needed from the Metro Separate School Board, Metro Parks and Property Department, the MTRCA, and the City of Scarborough; there is some opposition from local residents.

Recommendations/opportunities for Bluffer's Park:

A scenic and safe pedestrian access route should be constructed through the Brimley Road Ravine to Bluffer's.



Scarborough Heights Park, November 1983.

Bluffer's Park, July 1988.

D. The Guild Inn

The Inn is a hotel set in a pastoral setting that features many cultural and architectural artifacts, as well as a restaurant, gardens, woodlands, and pedestrian access to the waterfront shoreline.

Among proposals for the Inn, the MTRCA has suggested that a swimming beach be established. There are also schemes for creating a small craft day mooring area; a beach trail to Bluffer's and East Point parks; and redevelopment proposals for the Inn itself, which have been made by its board of management.

Access to the shoreline at the Inn is on land owned by the MTRCA and managed by a provincially appointed board. However, efforts have thus far been unsuccessful in developing a master plan to improve public use of the property that will, at the same time, address community concerns about traffic, noise, etc.

Recommendations/opportunities for the Guild Inn:

The Guild Inn has a special character and offers a range of opportunities for public use. The combination of architectural artifacts and art on the site make it interesting to explore. The view from the top of the Bluffs is spectacular and, combined with pedestrian access to the shoreline below, has tremendous potential for regional and local use. Long-term lease arrangements and appropriate infrastructure investments are required for the hotel; similarly, significant investment is needed to document, store, and display the various art pieces appropriately.

Public use of the property can continue while extensive improvements are being planned. The MTRCA should continue with shoreline improvements and Bluff stabilization, in order to facilitate public use of the Guild Inn shoreline and links to Bluffer's and East Point parks.

Guild Inn, February 1984.

East Point Park, July 1988.

E. East Point Park

East Point Park is an open field and meadow, some of which has previously been disturbed by its use in industry and construction. It has a view of the lake, a Model Aircraft Club, and interesting communities of plant and bird life.

Metro and the City of Scarborough are currently considering a sports field complex for the area and the MTRCA has proposed boat-launching ramps and a harbour for small craft. There have also been proposals for managing the natural meadow areas and for creating a trout pond.

An issue is East Point Park's role as the only remaining major park site in Scarborough proposed as part of the MTRCA's current waterfront plan. Access is currently restricted to two roads through residential areas and some residents are opposed to the development of a regional park. The proposals include lakefill for a marina and a boat-launching area; lakefilling might affect sediment and water quality. A restriction on provincial funding to the MTRCA has delayed implementation of its park plan.

Recommendations/opportunities for East Point Park:

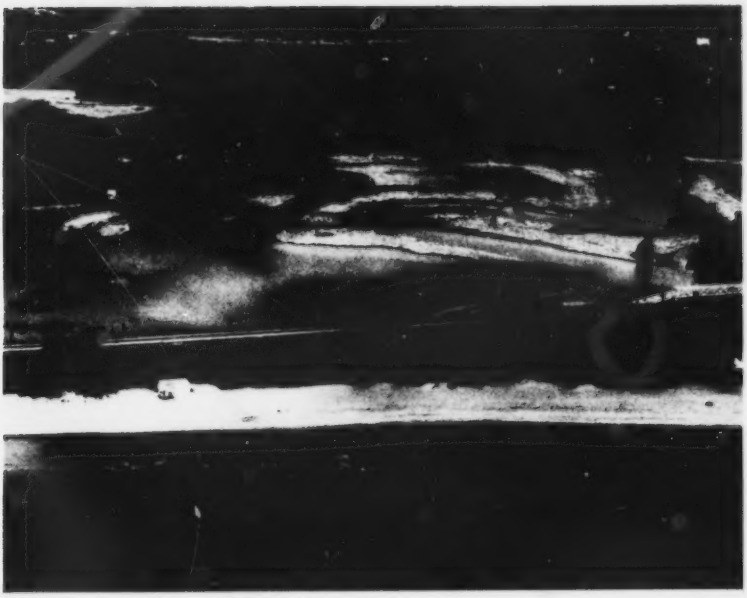
East Point Park provides an opportunity to preserve significant communities of plants; to create new launching ramps and moorings; to link a major waterfront park with the Highland Creek valley system; to build a unique put-and-take trout pond; and to take maximum advantage of open space areas around the adjacent Metro water filtration and water purification plants.

F. Highland Creek Marsh

Highland Creek Marsh is a mature valley containing wetlands and old fields. There may be asbestos waste deposits in the valley. It has been proposed that any industrial waste be cleaned up and that a trail system link the inland valley trail to Lake Ontario and East Point Park.

G. Port Union

Port Union is adjacent to former industrial sites with a railway embankment along its shoreline, and without any public facilities. A new waterfront community is being planned by owners and there is the possibility of using landfill for marsh development and to create open space. If new land is built in the lake, access to it would be safest if it were built under the existing railway track (i.e., put the tracks on a trestle).



Lower Rouge Marsh, May 1983.

The railways, the property owners, the City of Scarborough, and the MTRCA should co-operate to achieve a marvelous waterfront community not foreseen in previous waterfront plans.

Not surprisingly, the issue for the Port Union area is adequate clean-up before it is redeveloped. The site is separated from the lake by the railway, except at the Chesteron Shores, where some single-family houses remain amidst MTRCA lands.

Recommendations/opportunities for Port Union:

Redevelopment of the Johns-Manville and other former industrial properties is an opportunity to establish a new community on the site of the original village of Port Union. By carefully creating a buffer around the railway tracks and by judicious lakefilling, it would be possible to make another regional access point and open space. Links to East Point Park, the Highland Creek Valley, and the Lower Rouge area would be possible.

H. The Lower Rouge

The Lower Rouge is a river-mouth marsh and beach with a beach-house, a canoe/rowing club, and a bridge to the Petticoat Creek Conservation Area. There have been proposals to improve the local habitat, and to create a fishing pier and a link to Port Union.

Other recommendations/opportunities for the Scarborough Sector:

The Harrison Estate property, located between Springbank Avenue and Lakehurst Crescent, is currently for sale and should be acquired for public purposes. Given the shortage of waterfront open space in the west end of Scarborough, and the effect of erosion set-back requirements on development in the area, it should be carefully considered for acquisition by Scarborough and the MTRCA.

If the grounds of the Toronto Hunt Club become available in the future, they, like the Harrison Estate, should be given a high priority for acquisition, at least of the shoreline and appropriate open space links to Kingston Road.

St. Augustine's Seminary, the Metropolitan Separate School Board, the Metro Parks and Property Department, the MTRCA, and the City of Scarborough have an opportunity to resolve the issue of access to the topland area, now owned by the MTRCA, at the rear of St. Augustine's. They should co-operate to create a combined parking area and other facilities adjacent to Brimley Road, as proposed by the MTRCA.

Petticoat Creek Conservation Area, July 1988.

Frenchman's Bay, November 1988.

7. Pickering/Ajax Sector

The Pickering/Ajax sector begins at the east side of the Rouge River mouth and extends to the east end of Ajax; much of the shoreline has been acquired by the MTRCA or is used for such public purposes as the Pickering Generating Station and the Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control Plant.Our analysis focuses on four areas: the Petticoat Creek Conservation Area; Frenchman's Bay; Duffin Creek; and the Ajax waterfront.

A. The Petticoat Creek Conservation Area

The Petticoat Creek Conservation Area is an urban park that includes an artificial lake for swimming, group picnic areas, trails, a beach, and parking. It has been proposed that camping be developed and that a link be created to the Lower Rouge and Frenchman's Bay.

Conflicts/issues: the Rosebank area on the east side of the mouth of the Rouge River has been partially acquired by the MTRCA for future incorporation within the Petticoat Creek Conservation Area. But acquisition has been stalled for ten years by lack of provincial funds. Access is gained through residential areas to the north, and any public use of the area would be difficult unless acquisition is completed.

While pedestrians may enter the Petticoat Creek Conservation Area without charge, there is a fee for vehicles, which helps to support the cost of maintaining the area. A shortage of funds has precluded substantial improvements to the park since it was opened in 1975. Parking capacity is severely stretched on busy summer weekends, as are all other park facilities. Potential vehicular links from the Petticoat Creek Conservation Area to Frenchman's Bay, needed to expand programs and the revenue base, will be strongly opposed by local residents.

B. Frenchman's Bay

Frenchman's Bay is predominantly marsh, beach, docks, and harbour; existing facilities include marinas, the Frenchman's Bay Yacht Club, fishing, boardsailing, and some parking.

The Pickering Harbour Company has proposed making improvements to the harbour entrance, while the MTRCA wants to improve the beaches. There have also been suggestions for a shoreline trail, a restaurant, and parking lots.

Duffin's Creek Marsh, July 1988.

Ajax Waterfront, August 1985.

Conflicts/issues: regional access to the shoreline is constrained by the residential character of West Shore Boulevard and Liverpool Road, but, even more seriously, by the lack of parking areas near the lake. There are only minimal support facilities at present, although the MTRCA and the Town of Pickering have proposed some improvements. Acquisition by the MTRCA of private lands along the lakeshore on the west side of the Bay has been constrained by a shortage of provincial funds, and has resulted in conflicts between home owners and users of the park.

Development pressures at the north end of the Bay threaten some of the remaining marshes, as does run-off from developed areas north of the Bay.

The MTRCA plan envisages pedestrian access around the perimeter of the Bay, but ownership and development patterns make that plan unlikely.

The depth of the water, particularly in the narrow entrance channel, is minimal and requires maintenance dredging.

The Pickering Harbour Company and the Town of Pickering have been in conflict about municipal land-use controls as applied to the company's holdings.

C. Duffin Creek

Duffin's Creek is predominantly a marsh area with open space and a canoe launch; the MTRCA has proposed an interpretative centre and Ajax wishes to create trails along the Creek.

Conflicts/issues: the marsh area offers excellent recreational and educational opportunities, for which the MTRCA has acquired land and prepared plans. Adequate funding has not been available to impose access controls that would protect the area, nor have any public facilities been constructed.

Upstream development could seriously affect the hydrology of the basin and result in changes to flows, sediment, and nutrient loads that could affect the quality of the marsh unless the MTRCA and the municipalities were able to put adequate controls in place.

D. The Ajax Waterfront

The Ajax waterfront is predominantly a manicured park; existing public facilities include trails and parking. Among the proposed developments by the MTRCA are washrooms

and landscaping. A developer is proposing a marina/hotel/condo development.

Conflicts/issues: most of the waterfront was acquired by the MTRCA prior to its being developed; conflicts, therefore, are relatively minor. Improvements to the waterfront, particularly by planting trees and shrubs, have been slower than planned because of limited funding.

One privately owned site at the foot of Harwood Avenue remains to be developed; done carefully, it could produce a vibrant mix of residential and commercial properties, including a marina; but particular attention must be paid to minimizing the impact on local residential areas, where there is opposition to the development.

The Paradise Park area at the east end of the sector has been partially acquired by the MTRCA, but limited funds have delayed completion of the acquisition and provision of support facilities. Conflict between park users and residents has been minimal.

The Carruther's Creek marsh has a fine wildlife habitat, which should be protected. Although it was part of the MTRCA's acquisition plan, funding was unavailable and the property was recently sold. The MTRCA and the Town of Ajax must work closely to ensure that the marsh area is protected while adjacent lands are being developed.

Opportunities/Recommendations for the Ajax waterfront:

Much of the potential of the Pickering/Ajax waterfront has been realized, thanks to the MTRCA's implementation of the 1967 Waterfront Plan, but there are still substantial gaps. The Rosebank area problems must be resolved by the Town of Pickering and the MTRCA: either the MTRCA must be given sufficient funds to meet its acquisition needs or careful redevelopment of portions of MTRCA lands should be permitted, in order to finance acquisitions and achieve the primary objectives of regional access and public use.

There is also a need to resolve problems of partially completed acquisition in the area between the Petticoat Creek Conversation Area and Frenchman's Bay: the Town of Pickering and the MTRCA need to work together to achieve their goals for the community.

General Policy Goals and Implementation Strategies

Having analysed the Metro area waterfront from Mississauga to Ajax, on a site-by-site basis, we here identify and discuss 12 general policy goals and related implementation strategies that we suggest should guide future decisions regarding the waterfront. The general policy goals are not presented in order of importance: all are important and should become part of integrated planning in the future.

In considering the Metro waterfront, it is necessary to ask questions that are important in determining what changes are beneficial.

What makes Metro Toronto's waterfront distinctive and different from other urban waterfronts?

How are the special recreational needs of minorities (e.g., ethnic groups, the disabled, seniors, children, naturalists, and others) being met on the waterfront? These recreational needs include such activities as hiking; walking; cycling; nature study and shoreline conservation; water-related activities including boating, fishing, boardsailing, and swimming; such winter activities as skiing, ice-fishing, ice-boating, skating, and the like; and children's activities.

How can the land base of the waterfront be protected and enhanced in waterfront developments?

Is the history of the waterfront being considered — in terms of preservation, adaptation, education, and interpretation — in waterfront developments?

Are there good links between places, in east-west connections to the waterfront and in the north-south corridors leading to it?

1. Public Ownership of the Water's Edge

The Report of the Access and Movement Work Group discusses in detail the transportation network to and along the waterfront; we wish to reinforce the overriding importance of public access to the waterfront as an aspect of our own mandate. People can't enjoy a waterfront they can't see and can't get to.

By public access, we mean both direct physical access to the water's edge and broad economic and social access to waterfront places, as we discuss in the policy goal statements.

A Public Water's Edge

Toronto Island Boardwalk

Island View Parkette, Etobicoke

As mentioned earlier, for too long Torontonians have been cut off from large chunks of their waterfront. Although the situation is improving in some areas, physical access is still difficult or impossible in many locations, where east-west transportation corridors impede north-south crossings (for example, in broad stretches of Scarborough, where rail lines hug the narrow shoreline; in placesx where the Gardiner/Lakeshore Corridor discourages even the keenest pedestrian from venturing to the lake; and where lakeside buildings block both physical and visual access — whether medium and high-rise towers in the Central Waterfront Area and parts of Etobicoke, or lines of low-rise single-family dwellings in much of Scarborough and Etobicoke).

After considerable discussion, we decided that the only reliable way to ensure that future generations of Torontonians have direct and convenient physical access to the water's edge is to take public ownership of a strip of land along the water. More detailed study would be required to determine exactly how wide an area would be required, although we can now suggest that the precise amount would vary according to a number of factors, including the physical nature of the site under study and the proposed uses of adjacent areas.

While this may appear to be a radical suggestion in the Canadian context, private ownership and use of beaches and water's edge have never been permitted in many other parts of the world where beaches are public, period. Even in Ontario, the Crown used to own a right-of-way of more than 18 metres around its lakes (similar to roadway allowances still held by various levels of government).

Within Metro, the City of Toronto has recently adopted a policy to place lands along the water's edge in public ownership "where practicable" and to have them "freely accessible to the public at all times". The City of Etobicoke is beginning to create a public water's edge by making agreements with private developers seeking approval for redevelopments along the waterfront; and the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA) has assembled lands along much of the Scarborough shoreline. We think these efforts should be supported, and the powers of other senior government agencies should be brought to bear to reach the following long-range

policy goal: ultimate public ownership of the water's edge, with both physical and visual access to that publicly owned edge at specific locations.

We recognize that this long-range goal cannot be reached instantly. But a number of interim implementation strategies can be adopted to ameliorate present conditions and, over time, lead to public ownership.

We recommend, first, that there be no further sale of lands currently held in public ownership — including provincial and federal, as well as municipally owned land. In the last 20 years, the Toronto Harbour Commissioners has sold a number of parcels of land in the Central Waterfront Area. These sales may have made good economic sense, but they have not necessarily made good waterfront planning sense. In some cases, massive waterfront developments, which decrease rather than increase public access to the central waterfront, have already risen, or are in the process of rising.

In other cases, future development on land already sold but not developed threatens to cut off visual access to significant parts of the central waterfront. This should not continue. And the principle that applies to the THC applies with equal force to other public agencies. When private or non-profit developments on public land do make good planning sense, we recommend that, rather than outright sale, long-term leases be drawn up that clearly define and protect the public interest.

Second, we recommend that a significant strip of land along the water's edge be transferred to public ownership for public use when developers seek approval for redevelopment projects along the waterfront. This principle is being implemented in the City of Toronto and Etobicoke, but it should be a mandatory part of the approval process along the length of the Metro waterfront.

Third, we recommend that aggressive public land acquisition programs be instituted on the waterfront. Here again, some jurisdictions have been assembling lands while others have not; the strategy requires both strong political will and financial backing. It also requires creativity in negotiating, as, for example, MTRCA's approach in dealing with owners of lakefront properties threatened by erosion: the owner deeds the Authority a strip at the water's edge and, in return, the MTRCA provides shoreline protection.

Fourth, we recommend that water's edge promenades be created along Metro's waterfront and that they reflect the character of the surrounding waterfront area. Strolling along the water's edge, enjoying the spectacular panoramas, hearing the lap of the waves, and feeling the (not always gentle) breezes are undoubtedly among the most popular waterfront pleasures. Virtually everyone enjoys close contact with the water's edge at some time and should have the opportunity to do so here in Metro.

Fortunately, large sections of the Toronto waterfront do have waterfront promenades: old-fashioned boardwalks stretch along part of the islands and the eastern Beach; hard-topped promenades snake around the buildings and water slips of Harbourfront; rustic trails dip toward the wild lagoons of the Leslie Street Spit; asphalt paths fan out across other neatly manicured waterfront parks.

But much more could and should be done to ensure that currently inaccessible waterfront locations are opened to the public. As noted above, the new linkages need not be standard-issue promenades, but they should reflect the special character of the surrounding area, whether that is urban commercial, industrial, pastoral, or wilderness.

Fifth, in addition to promenades, which connote "pedestrian walkways", we advocate improving existing cycling pathways and creating new ones. The Martin Goodman Trial is an excellent start, but too often it veers far out of sight of the water and, perhaps of even more concern, it has fallen into disrepair because no single agency is responsible for its continued maintenance. Moreover, while impressively extensive, the Trail still does not cover the entire length of the Metro waterfront. The eastern and western wings of the waterfront deserve to have their own cycling systems.

Sixth, we recommend that parkettes or "town landings" be created at the water's edge,especially at the end of streets leading to the water. As opportunities arise (e.g., when private properties that currently block access to the water come up for sale), waterfront lands can be assembled and become, literally, beachheads for future assembly along the waterfront. They also can become valuable public focal points strung out along, and connected by, the narrower water's edge promenades.

Parts of Etobicoke illustrate the value of even small parkettes at the end of streets in giving visual access to the water from major arteries inland. Much of the Etobicoke waterfront is privately owned at present and covered with low-rise, single-family housing. Fortunately, however, in some areas relatively small parkettes have been created that punch holes in private development and give some public access to the water. Much more of this should be done throughout Metro.

Seventh, we recommend special design and landscaping of roads running parallel to the water and linking major waterfront open spaces; these should be undertaken as both an interim measure in cases where it is particularly difficult to gain access directly along the water's edge, and as a positive measure to allow cyclists and motorists to enjoy the waterfront, while removing them from pedestrian traffic. For example, in Etobicoke, Lake Promenade between Marie Curtis and Col. Samuel Smith parks could become a special place if trees were planted and distinctive street furniture used. Queen's Quay, both west and east of Yonge Street, is another likely road for special treatment.

Finally, we want to emphasize the importance of creating both east-west open space linkages along the length of the water's edge, and north-south open space linkages to the water. Metro's ravine and river valley systems provide marvelous opportunities to bring people to the water through inland areas of great natural beauty. For example, ravine access to Bluffer's Park, as noted earlier, could provide a spectacular approach to the water. Elsewhere, a more urban form of north-south open space linkage would be appropriate (e.g., linking Toronto's Don Valley to the industrial port district, or SkyDome to Harbourfront, or Etobicoke's Lakeshore Boulevard to Humber Bay Park).

In summary, we recommend the following general policy goal: ultimate public ownership of the water's edge, with ease of physical and visual access from specific locations. The related implementation strategies:

- no further sale of publicly held land but, if absolutely necessary, long-term leasing arrangements;
- transfer of land along the water's edge to public ownership for public use, as a precondition of redevelopment approval;
- aggressive programs of waterfront-land acquisition;

- development and maintenance of water's edge promenades, the character of which reflect the character of the surrounding waterfront area;
- creation of new, and improvement of existing, waterfront cycling paths;
- creation of parkettes or "town landings" at the water's edge, especially at the end of streets that lead to the water;
- special design and landscaping of roads running parallel to the water and linking major waterfront open spaces;
- an increase in north-south open space links to the waterfront.

2. Economically-balanced programming

The waterfront belongs, or should belong, to everyone. But an unfortunate spin-off of some of the exciting but very expensive transformation of the Terminal Warehouse into today's glamorous mixed-use Queen's Quay commercial and luxurious condominium complex is that many Torontonians think the waterfront is an elitist place where only the rich can afford to shop, to play, and to live. The perception may not entirely match the reality -- there are non-profit co-ops and countless high-quality free programs at Harbourfront; but there is just enough validity to the criticism to make it imperative that all government agencies ensure that development, redevelopment, and use of the waterfront are not geared to people with high incomes.

Waterfront communities should not be restricted to only the well-heeled, double income, childless or retired couples so eagerly sought by some condominium developers. We support the Housing and Neighbourhoods Work Group's contention that those of all income levels and family types should have the opportunity to live in waterfront communities; in terms of our particular mandate, waterfront places and programming should be made available to potential users from all economic strata. In support of such economic access to the waterfront, we recommend the adoption of a general policy goal of economically balanced programming of waterfront spaces and facilities.

We have some suggestions for implementing those programs. First, there should be no entrance fees to waterfront parkland or promenades. While special fees might be appropriate for some activities and events in such waterfront parks as the Exhibition, the Mariposa Folk Festival, or opera-in-a-tent, no public waterfront park should be permanently off-limits to some people because entrance fees of even supposedly modest amounts are charged.

General access to Harbourfront, the islands, the Leslie Street Spit, Ontario Place, and other amenities should be free. Furthermore, major sections of waterfront parks should not be economically roped off by allowing permanent attractions that occupy large sites to charge high admission or user fees.

Second, the opportunities for enjoying boating on a low budget are very limited. We heard a number of pleas for low-cost public marinas where people could learn to sail, launch a small boat, or rent a canoe or other boat for a relatively inexpensive afternoon's pleasure. We think these suggestions make sense and recommend that earnest efforts be made to establish more low-cost public boating facilities at various locations along the waterfront.

Finally, in cases where higher-cost facilities and programs seem appropriate and are offered at various locations along the waterfront, we recommend establishing free days so that members of the public not ordinarily able to enjoy these attractions would, from time to time, have that opportunity. If a costly facility such as the Louvre in Paris can arrange to have free days, so should Toronto's waterfront attractions, which, after all, benefit from being located on a public recreational resource.

In summary, as a general policy goal, we recommend economically-balanced programming of waterfront spaces and facilities. In working toward the goal, we recommend:

- no entrance fees be charged to waterfront parklands or promenades;
- creation of more low-cost public boating facilities;
- free days for higher-cost facilities and programs.

3. Children and Other Frequently Ignored Groups

Just as the waterfront, which is such a special part of Metro, should not cater only to the economically advantaged, so it should not cater to a narrow range of other groups. All too often, the needs of children, the elderly, and the physically handicapped are ignored. Therefore, we recommend that, as a matter of policy, any planning, developing, and programming of waterfront parks and public amenities should take into account the special needs of those frequently ignored groups; in addition, after careful study, steps must be taken to ensure that all waterfront amenities are physically safe for women.

Fortunately, some real advances have been made in recent years, especially at Harbourfront, where a great deal of effort has been devoted to programming for children of different ages; one co-op has been built there specifically for the physically handicapped; many other facilities are accessible to those in wheelchairs; and a special garden has been designed to appeal to the blind. Nevertheless, much more could be done there and elsewhere.

Various residents' groups have suggested that the needs of children of various ages should receive high priority, perhaps by providing more low-cost boating facilities described earlier; re-establishing the once-popular Adventure Playground at Harbourfront; and creating skateboard courses in less intensely used lakeside parkland.

We solicited as much information about the special needs of children as time allowed; we recognize the need for much more detailed study of this issue and we recommend that such a study be undertaken in order to make Toronto's waterfront attractive and accessible to all children.

Various kinds of safety, including water safety, should be emphasized, as should the proximity of attractions for children to residential areas.

We also gathered information on making the waterfront safer and more attractive to women; in the central waterfront especially, the desolate, confusing pedestrian approaches created by the Gardiner/Lakeshore Corridor are a major concern for them. We recommend more detailed study on making the waterfront safer and more attractive to women, as well as to the elderly and the physically handicapped.

A Children's Waterfront

Skateboarding at the Toronto Islands

Picking wild strawberries at Ward's Island

In summary, we recommend that planning, developing and programming of waterfront parks and public amenities take into consideration the special needs of frequently ignored groups, including children, the elderly, and the physically handicapped, and that attention be given to the general need to assure safety, including physical safety for women. Those goals can be realized by:

- undertaking a study on how to make the waterfront attractive and accessible to children of all ages, with specific plans for those potential users;
- undertaking a study of how to make the waterfront safer and more accessible to women, with special emphasis on the problems posed by the Gardiner/Lakeshore Corridor;
- undertaking a study of how to make the waterfront more attractive and accessible to the elderly;
- undertaking a study of how to make the waterfront more attractive and accessible to the physically handicapped.

4. Diversity

In addition to ensuring public access to the waterfront, perhaps the most important policy goal we have identified is to maintain and enhance the waterfront's overall diversity. By that we mean both diverse general uses (residential, industrial, commercial, recreational), and diverse recreational uses (active/passive, developed/undeveloped, urban/rural, etc.). Moreover, we mean diversity across the waterfront, as well as within its individual sectors, and, where appropriate, within individual sites. Such physical diversity should help attract a variety of economic and social groups to the waterfront.

The residents of the town of York lived, worked, and played close to the water at a time when the scale of development was so small there were none of the serious usage conflicts that would later emerge, at least partially as the result of changing standards of acceptable physical environments for workers and working class residents. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, the work place became more distant from the home: uses were more sharply differentiated and isolated from each other, a trend that was reinforced by the introduction of the streetcar, the commuter railway, and, most significantly, the automobile, which allowed people to travel greater distances much more easily.

Waterfront Diversity

Mouth of the Rouge River

Port Industrial District

Even during the time of its greatest industrialization, however, Toronto's waterfront still had an admirable degree of variety. While the central area was devoted, in the main, to railways and water-related industry, citizens lived in such lakeside communities as Parkdale and Swansea to the west and the Beach to the east.

Those eager to enjoy a variety of lakeside recreational activities could stroll along boardwalks, join a multitude of boating clubs, ride roller coasters, and swim in relatively unpolluted water. Even in the central area, dedicated water enthusiasts could make their way to the islands, which were even more of a residential-recreational mix than they are today: Hanlan's Point Amusement Park throbbed at the western end; a greensward dotted with picnic tables and shaded by old willows beckoned at Centre Island; campers spread their canvas at Ward's Island; hotels and boarding-houses catering to every level of society were scattered about; and summer cottages of all sizes and descriptions, offering summer retreats to "both the Masseys and the masses", stretched from Hanlan's Point to Ward's Island. Then, as now, a relatively small, hardy group of people lived year-round on the islands. It was a mix of uses that fell out of favour for a time.

During the great period of suburbanization after World War II, single-use zoning reached an apotheosis of sorts, and it is still highly prized in some quarters. It was, and is, a pattern of development with both costs and benefits. In response to some of those costs, a more integrated, mixed-use approach to urban living and development has evolved -- one that, by and large, we support and is the reason we support maintaining the overall diversity of the waterfront. We do not want the entire waterfront to be devoted to industrial use — or residential use — or even recreational use. Because we want an appropriate mix, we recommend that, as a general policy, the waterfront's inherent diversity be maintained, including its use for industrial, commercial, and residential purposes, as well as for recreation and wilderness areas.

But what is an "appropriate mix"? While we can make some general comments here to support the concept, and have made some specific proposals in the sectoral analysis, more detailed and comprehensive planning is required to give the general goal actual substance.

In the course of our discussions, we found that the notion of "predominant character" is useful in describing the essence of different waterfront places that we wish to see preserved and enhanced. The Port of Toronto is essentially "water-related industry"; Harbourfront essentially an "urban recreational-residential mix"; the islands essentially a "pastoral residential-recreational mix"; Bluffer's Park essentially a "manicured marina park"; and the Leslie Street Spit essentially an "urban wilderness". Rather than becoming homogenized from end to end, a fate that seems to threaten various waterfront redevelopment schemes elsewhere around the world (the architectural sobriquet "Hyatt Regency Revival" might aptly describe many downtown waterfront redevelopments), we want the Toronto waterfront to be a model of social and physical diversity.

Diversity is not appropriate everywhere and some uses do conflict, most often between heavy industry and residential developments — either between existing heavy industry and proposed residential use, or between past industrial and proposed new residential use on the same site. Similarly, conflicts are likely to occur between heavy industry (past or present) and recreational uses. At the other end of the scale, conflict is likely between an urban wilderness such as the Leslie Street Spit and all but the least-invasive human activities, including some that are recreational. Obviously, great care must be exercised in the fine-grain planning of all these types of locations.

Questions of scale also enter into decisions regarding diversity and maintenance of an appropriate mix of uses. Although relatively small pockets of conservation can be identified and combined with more intensely developed uses (e.g., the Toronto Islands), conservation areas and urban wildernesses, by their very nature, tend to be extensive.

Members of the Work Group believe that industrial uses are critical to the economic health of Metro and, obviously, water-related industrial uses have to be near water. The industrial port district, of more than 405 hectares (1,001 acres), should, in our opinion, remain predominantly an industrial area, and not be moved to Whitby or Hamilton or any other lakeside location.

The nature of the industry may shift significantly and port industrial use could probably be consolidated; in the future, the port district should include a broad mix of industrial, residential, and recreational development. (Recreational amenities would be used by local workers and residents, as well as by

water sports enthusiasts from the boarder region). Here, as elsewhere, extremely careful detailed planning would be required to make the mix work.

Finally, we would emphasize our belief that one of the pleasures of a diverse waterfront is the opportunity to watch a working port in operation. In fact, there should be more opportunities for people to do just that, and, elsewhere in our Report, we suggest ways it might be accomplished.

In summary, we recommend as a general policy goal that the waterfront's inherent diversity be maintained by including industrial, commercial, residential, recreational, and wilderness uses in development and redevelopment. In order to reach that goal, we suggest that:

> in any report it makes, the Royal Commission should recommend appropriate measures to support the current predominant character of those waterfront places that contribute positively to the overall diversity of the Metro waterfront.

5. Ecologically Sound Planning and Development

The Environment and Health Work Group has looked at ecologically sound planning and development in great detail, but we wish to emphasize that clean air, healthy soil, and, above all, clean water, are essential to enjoyment of the waterfront.

In recent years, Torontonians have become all too familiar with the sight of one beach after another being "posted" throughout the summer as a result of unacceptably high levels of water pollution. This experience, coupled with publicly perceived over-development of Harbourfront, has generated intense public pressure for "someone" to do "something" about the waterfront. As the authors of the City of Toronto's *Remedial Action Plan for the Toronto Waterfront* say, "People should be able to swim and engage in water sports in Lake Ontario without developing any disease or illness." Amen. And we would add: sport fishermen should be able to eat their catch without risk to their health; lakefront spectators should be able to enjoy waterfront views without ugly flotsam and jetsam floating across their field of vision.

For all these reasons, we recommend, as a matter of policy, ecologically sound planning, development, and use of the land and water at the waterfront.

A number of implementation strategies flow from the general policy and are related to our particular area of interest. First, as discussed in detail by the Environment and Health Work Group, lakefilling to extend shoreline and create parkland has come under fire in recent years, both because of the quality of the fill and the configuration of the created shoreline: too frequently, contaminated soil from construction sites has been dumped into the lake and, in some cases, the newly created embayments have captured pollutants that used to be diluted and washed further out into the lake where they were a less direct environmental hazard. Measures are being taken to tackle these problems; the MTRCA, for example, has a new inspection system to check the quality of lakefill. That, and other appropriate efforts, should be supported.

Intense urban development, with its run-off, sewage, and other waste disposal problems, is discussed in detail by the Environment and Health Work Group, applying the widely supported concept of "sustainable development". In our concern about public amenities, we trust that the proposed Seaquarium, with its large-scale salt- and fresh-water exhibits, will be designed in keeping with the project's emphasis on ecological awareness and will itself be a demonstration of sustainable development.

We also recommend that the only recreational water uses permitted on the waterfront be those that do no harm to either the water or the water's edge. We are concerned about gasoline spillage from power boats; dirty grey water and refuse from large boats, whether power or sail, as well as boats berthed at marinas or along seawalls; and about shoreline damage from heavy power-boat traffic, especially in such environmentally sensitive areas as the Leslie Street Spit.

The Toronto Harbour Commissioners marina, currently under construction in the Outer Harbour, will provide berths for more than 1,200 boats, of which about 70 percent will be power-operated. That is a matter of serious concern to us because it seems likely to create major traffic problems

between those boats entering the marina and the large numbers of boardsailors and small-boat sailors who use the stretch of water sheltered by the Spit to the south; moreover, it may damage an environmentally sensitive area.

Waterfront developments provide wonderful opportunities to heighten general environmental awareness among visitors, mixing education and fun, and to be models of environmental good citizenship. Harbourfront, Ontario Place and other waterfront amenities (such as the Cousteau Centre Harbourfront hopes to develop) should mount temporary and permanent exhibitions specifically about various aspects of the environment. The facilities should also strive to be a good example in their own use of the environment: recycling as many materials as possible; eliminating fast-food outlets that use disposable plates and utensils; and devoting at least some of their areas to "naturalized parkscapes" with native plants, some unmowr grass, and organic gardening techniques where possible.

In summary, we recommend the adoption of a general policy goal of ecologically sound planning, development, and use of the land and water at the waterfront. In order to reach that goal, we recommend:

- use of uncontaminated landfill only;
- approval of only those lakefill configurations that do not create environmental damage;
- recreational development at the water's edge that does not cause environmental damage;
- recreational use of the water that does not harm it or the water's edge;
- facilities and programs that increase awareness of the environment;
- the practice of good environmental citizenship by the operators of waterfront parks and other public amenities.

Outside Canada Malting

Inside Toronto Islands Lighthouse

6. Historical Continuity

The past is important: it tells us where we have come from; what shapes what we are and influences what we will become. The built environment — historically, architecturally, and culturally rich buildings, districts, and landscapes — gives us a sense of place — that *this* is significant and different from *that*. It provides a physical bond with a shared past and helps provide mental and physical stability in a rapidly changing world. Ideally, it becomes a living link between past and present. Old buildings, old districts, and old landscapes, adapted where appropriate, become incorporated into today's world, rather than being cordoned off as monuments to a past that seems to have lost meaning and relevance.

Toronto's waterfront has a rich — albeit a constantly threatened and, thus far, physically shrinking — heritage; unfortunately, too many links with the past have been smashed by the wrecker's ball and flattened by the bulldozer: most of Sunnyside is gone; the Maple Leaf Mills are gone. More than 450 buildings on the Toronto Islands, including those in Hanlan's Point Amusement Park, Durnan's century-old boathouse, the Lightkeepers' Cottages, hotels of all sizes and descriptions, and picturesque Victorian and Edwardian mansions, can now be recalled only in paintings and photographs.

Other significant links, however, do remain, including the *beaux arts* Music Building, which is holding on by a thread at Exhibition Place; Fort York, all but lost among a tangle of roadways; and the Canada Malting complex, one of our few remaining examples of a distinctively North American waterfront industrial architecture. These and other important buildings of our past should be saved and incorporated into the life of the modern waterfront. In that regard, we recommend that, as a matter of general policy, the historical continuity of the waterfront be maintained and reinforced.

While we make many recommendations about specific sites and opportunities elsewhere, we want at this point to discuss several general implementation strategies.

First and foremost, heritage preservation should be identified as an important element of all plans related to the waterfront. Incorporating the Toronto Historical Board's current assessment of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners lands into future THC plans would be precisely the approach we advocate.

Significantly, Metro has never developed a heritage policy, for the waterfront or elsewhere, and the Province has exempted its own buildings from the protection of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, while the federal government takes a similar approach to federal buildings. As a result, some historically distinguished buildings owned by the two senior levels of government are saved — and some are not. A stronger and more coherent approach should be adopted by all levels of government.

Second, in addition to the historically important buildings and archaeological sites emphasized in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, heritage should also cover culturally significant districts other than Fort York, even those that are less vital to preserving history. These include such elements of the waterfront as a part of the working port; the islands' residential communities; such landscape features as the bluffs or distinctive waterfront wildlife habitats; views of the water, which must not be blocked by new buildings and structures — for example, those down Yonge Street, York Street, or along the Western Gap; elements of the waterfront's industrial and marine heritage, including the lakers, tugs, and fishing boats; and such historical patterns of development as the distinctive waterfront slips. The Province is currently reviewing its heritage policies and should expand its definition of heritage to include these elements.

Third, sensitive adaptive reuse of historically and architecturally significant buildings should be encouraged, in order to reinforce the historical continuity of the waterfront. The transformation of Queen's Quay Terminal Warehouse into the vibrant, if expensive, Queen's Quay complex is one successful example, and conversion of the adjacent ice and power house into a gallery complex is another.

The potential to transform the currently vacant and looming Canada Malting structures into a new marine or city museum, or a commercial-residential-hotel complex was mentioned in our sectoral analysis but bears repeating. These distinctive industrial buildings represent one of the prime opportunities to adapt a major element of our waterfront heritage. Similarly, the complex of *beaux arts* Exhibition buildings at the western end of Exhibition Place offer stimulating opportunities for adaptation.

Finally, the current shoreline configuration of the central waterfront, with its distinctive pattern of quays and slips, should be preserved, not only because lakefilling poses

potential environmental problems, but because this existing shoreline has historic importance in and of itself. Previous shorelines — notably the Front Street embankment and even a portion of the shoreline along glacial lake know as Lake Iroquois, which extended to about the present St. Clair Avenue — might also be highlighted in some appropriate fashion.

In summary, we recommend that, as a general policy goal, the historical continuity of the waterfront be maintained and reinforced.

In order to reach that goal, the following programs should be implemented:

- preserving the waterfront heritage should be affirmed as a priority in all plans affecting the waterfront;
- the concept of heritage should be broadly defined to include, not just architecturally or historically important buildings and archaeological sites, but, in addition, districts, landscapes, and views, as well as elements of our marine and industrial heritages, and historic patterns of development;
- sensitive adaptation of historically or architecturally significant buildings;
- preservation of the current shoreline of the central waterfront.

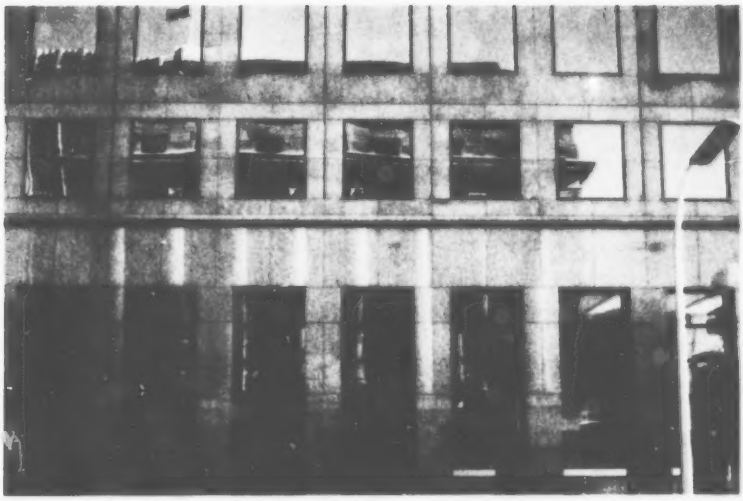
7. Disseminating Information

People can't enjoy the many pleasures of the waterfront if they don't know what they are, where they are, or how to get to them. That is so for both residents and visitors. Our next general policy goal, therefore, is that information about the waterfront should be widely disseminated to the public.

While a good deal of information is available at kiosks on the waterfront and at tourist information centres elsewhere, much more could be done to inform members of the public and members of the tourism industry itself about the waterfront.

Proof of the need for widespread education is contained in a recent newspaper story quoting a supposedly knowledgeable tourism industry spokesman who suggested that foreign visitors are not impressed by a country that has only 120 years of history: he is apparently unaware that the City of Toronto is

Where's the Lake?



View from the steps of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners building.

View from the York Street underpass.

155 years old and that, nearly a century before then, a French fort stood on a promontory that once overlooked the lake at what is now the southern perimeter of Exhibition Place. Even earlier, native villages dotted the landscape, many predating contact with Europeans; those communities, in turn, were preceded by the mammoths that once roamed the shores of the glacial Lake Iroquois.

In other words, Toronto and its splendid waterfront have both a past and a present that can, and must, be conveyed to Torontonians and to actual and potential visitors.

Beyond this interpretation gap stretches another gap, both of geography and of access: even if people know what attractions await them, they often don't know how to get to them. The already discussed physical barriers to ready access to the waterfront conspire against the efforts of people, especially pedestrians, to find the water. As someone from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation commented wryly, visitors staying at the Royal York Hotel often don't know that Toronto is a waterfront city even though the water lies less than a kilometre from their hotel. How much more difficult it must be for those staying at even more distant amenities.

Gaps in information, interpretation, and knowledge of access can, and must, be addressed. First, large waterfront maps should be posted in public locations at the waterfront, transit stops, hotels, cultural centres, and other locations throughout Metro. They should clearly identify both pedestrian walks and other types of transportation routes to the water.

Second, clear, attractively designed signs should mark pedestrian routes from the downtown to the water, especially between Front Street and the Inner Harbour.

Third, historical plaques should be placed at appropriate locations along the modern waterfront, and could include reproductions of old photographs or paintings of historic events that once occurred near the marked site; they could also be installed along earlier shorelines, including the Front Street Embankment, the SkyDome site, Exhibition Place, and St. Clair Avenue.

Finally, and most ambitiously, waterfront trails — for pedestrian and cars — could be laid out; in order to attract visitors, the trails could be publicized in maps like those available in many parts of the world, which direct attention to such tourist attractions as historic Boston's Freedom Trail, and Nova Scotia's Evangeline and Lighthouse auto trails.

The possibilities seem limitless. Historic trails could link Fort York, Stanley Barracks, and Fort Rouille, or link past and present amusement parks. On a grander scale, such trails could link widely dispersed but important sites from the War of 1812: Scarborough Bluffs, from which American ships were sighted in April 1813; the Island Lighthouse; Hanlan's Point, where a blockhouse once stood, though it failed to protect York against invasion; Sunnyside beach, where the Americans landed; Garrison Common, where much fighting occurred; Front Street, where a warship under construction was deliberately torched; Fort York, which was partly blown up and then rebuilt on a grander scale, and so on.

Modern trails could lead visitors through the working port. A children's waterfront trail could focus on places and events of special interest to children, while a photographers' waterfront could highlight unusual and dramatic look-out points. The shoppers' waterfront could provide up-to-date information for both bargain-hunters and others, while a boaters' waterfront could identify marine outfitters, services for visitors arriving by boat, and waterfront highlights visible from the lake.

A nature lover's waterfront could locate and describe both unique and typical waterfront habitats, ranging from the mouth of the Rouge, through Tommy Thompson Park, along the Leslie Street Spit and the Toronto Island to the Rattray Marsh. The writers' waterfront would identify sites where writers have lived, set their works, or communicated with their audience, as they do at the internationally renowned Harbourfront International Authors' Festival.

In summary, we recommend that dissemination of information about the waterfront, and interpretation of it to the public, be adopted as a general policy goal. In order to reach that goal, we recommend that:

- waterfront maps be posted in public locations at the waterfront and elsewhere in Metro;
- signs be improved along pedestrian routes to the waterfront;
- historic plaques with maps be placed at appropriate locations along the present waterfront and at earlier shorelines, to make people aware of waterfront trails — present and future — that link historic sites, elements of the working port, and other areas of interest to a variety of special groups.

8. Year-Round Use

Some people hate winter, and probably nothing we could suggest would entice them from their armchairs to visit the waterfront between November and April. Others love winter, and probably nothing we could do, apart from physically barring them, would deter this group from embracing their beloved wintertime activities. But most people fall somewhere between these extremes, and we could do a lot to make the winter waterfront more appealing to them.

Toronto, like many Canadian cities, has long, cold winters, and moderately long but very hot summers. While lake waters have a moderating influence on temperatures, any moderation in winter is frequently more than offset by cold winds sweeping across an expanse of open lake. Therefore, if we want people to use and enjoy their waterfront to the maximum extent possible — and we do — we must design public places that are appropriate for the area's climate. Unless physical and psychological measures are taken, great sections of the public waterfront will be empty of people, at considerable social and economic cost.

How can we make it possible to enjoy the waterfront year-round? While not appropriate everywhere, mixed-use development that animates nearby public spaces is important to keep the public using those spaces. When Harbourfront was first established, one major dilemma was how to draw people to what was basically a wind-swept industrial wasteland. A mix of residential, commercial, and public amenities was developed, where heavily programmed public spaces give non-residents and non-shoppers a good reason to travel to the waterfront.

People can't go to a waterfront park or amenity during the winter if there is no access route. Winter access by road (for example, to the Spit) or by ferry (to the Toronto Islands) must be maintained and proposals to the contrary should be rejected.

During the winter, the island ferry doesn't run to Centre Island, the most popular summer destination, and makes only weekday freight runs to Hanlan's Point. The only daily winter port of call is inhabited Ward's Island — another reason for

Winter Waterfront

View from Hanlan's Point toward the Leslie Street Spit.

Skating on Algonquin Island Lagoon.

supporting a residential-recreational mix on the islands. Otherwise, wintertime runners, cyclists, skiers, skaters, and islandophiles might not be able to venture to this important recreational resource.

Heated winter shelters should be installed at waterfront parks; such unheated amenities as Ontario Place and the buildings at the western end of Exhibition Place, which are used for only part of the year, should be assessed to see whether they can be renovated and used year-round.

Subtly, but equally important, waterfront buildings should be sited and massed to minimize climatic extremes: anyone who has had to fight through the high-rise maze of Harbour Square can appreciate low-rise buildings and site lay-outs that reduce — rather than increase — local wind conditions. Although most Harbourfront planning includes this aspect of waterfront design, Harbourpoint towers are a regrettable lapse; future designs elsewhere along the Metro waterfront should include climatic sensitivity.

Similarly, landscaping should be designed to moderate the waterfront climate, in summer by providing ample shade and in winter by planting evergreens and modulating landforms to shield against the prevailing winds.

Wherever possible and appropriate, winter recreational facilities should be provided along the waterfront; wherever possible and appropriate, winter festivals and special events should be supported.

Harbourfront has amply illustrated that people will travel to the waterfront during the winter if they are given sufficient reason to go, whether that special winter activity is skating, ice sculpturing, or ice canoeing, or such special activities, held during the winter in comfortable surroundings, as literary readings, Scottish country dancing, or craft shows. All waterfront amenities should be developed with winter in mind.

In summary, we recommend a general policy goal of designing waterfront parks and public amenities for year-round use, with suitable protection against extremes of climate. In order to reach that goal, we recommend:

- encouraging mixed-use development;
- maintaining road and ferry access in winter;
- heating shelters and other public amenities;
- siting and massing buildings, and designing landscaping, to minimize extremes of climates;
- providing winter recreational facilities and activities where possible;
- holding winter festivals and special events.

9. Dispersal of Major Facilities

"Put the dolphins in Etobicoke", one wag suggested at a meeting Work Group members attended with residents' organizations from the City of Toronto. Members of the Seaquarium Corporation were apparently listening: in early December last year, they announced that they will locate the Seaquarium in Humber Bay Park. While we don't know if dolphins should go in Etobicoke, North York or anywhere else, we are glad that they will not be frolicking at Harbourfront in Toronto Bay.

Apart from the environmental concerns we mentioned earlier, we believe the central waterfront is on the brink of over-development and over-crowding. The last thing that it — and Harbourfront in particular — needs is yet another attraction that draws more people and cars to the area on July and August weekends, when it is already most crowded.

Harbourfront, which is planning a Cousteau marine environment centre, might have been good for the Seaquarium because it would have provided a ready pool of potential customers, but would the Seaquarium have been good for Harbourfront? Probably not.

We believe the time has come to exercise extreme caution about locating more major facilities in the already well-served central portion of the waterfront. At the very least, each proposed facility should be assessed to determine whether it can be located only, or most appropriately, in the central area. For example, it probably makes sense to locate the Toronto Harbour Commissioners archives on the central city waterfront. We recommend that, as a general policy goal, major waterfront facilities be dispersed along the waterfront rather than being concentrated in the central area.

In order to reach that goal, we recommend that each major facility proposed for the central waterfront area be assessed to ascertain whether it will aggravate peak-time crowding and whether a central location is vital to the facility and makes sense for the surrounding waterfront.

10. Regional-Local Balance

The Metro waterfront is a major regional recreational resource and, with indications that the population in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) will continue to grow (some forecast it will double in the next 20 years), pressures on the waterfront and other regional resources will, of necessity, increase dramatically. While we don't want to get entangled in a numbers game — quality is as important as quantity — it is fair to suggest that the largest possible quantity of waterfront land can be reserved and used for public recreation and public amenities.

Because the waterfront, by its very nature, is a limited resource, especially in an era when we are becoming increasingly sceptical about lakefilling, there won't be much available in future. It should be noted, however, that, while the population of the GTA is expected to increase, most of that increase is expected in the outlying areas; the recreational needs of an expanded population simply cannot be met by the Metro waterfront alone — other resources will have to be identified and developed to meet the anticipated increase in demand.

This is not to say that planners have to passively accept all public demands for recreational facilities as immutable givens: some may be reflections of passing trends while others, which would harm the environment or occupy too much of the limited waterfront land, should remain unfilled.

It is doubtful, for example, that all demands for wet berths could be met in the Metro waterfront area. Rather than trying to pursue an endless, ultimately fruitless, search for more wet berths, recreation planners might be better advised to create as many as seems reasonable within the context of a limited regional resource and concentrate, instead, on changing public attitudes. Not an easy task perhaps, but, as the case of the environmental movement makes clear, public attitudes can be changed.

Having said that, we also want to acknowledge that the waterfront, like other regional recreational resources, must also serve local recreational needs. High Park, for example, is a regional park, but it is also a string of local parks along its periphery; the same is true of the waterfront and other regional parks. Obviously, if residents are encouraged to live in an area like Harbourfront, their local recreational needs must be met, although standards may differ from those in areas without regional resources. Sometimes, however, conflicts are inevitable: the waterfront can be many things to many people — a message we try to convey throughout this Report — but it cannot be all things to all people.

Sometimes one level of service may have to give way to another: a regional use such as an outdoor concert can be moved from a populated site (like Harbourfront) to a remote site (like Ontario Place or the Ex) while, in other cases, local residents will just have to grin and bear the inconvenience.

Following on this point, we believe that those choosing to live in or adjacent to a major regional waterfront recreational resource (the Toronto Islands, Harbourfront, the Beach, or new waterfront communities that may be established in future) must be willing to live with the crowds, noise, and special events likely to occur in those areas.

While planners and programmers can, and should, take measures to lessen the local impact of major events, residents must also exercise a high degree of tolerance. Fortunately, as several residents' groups have indicated to us, most people living near the waterfront enjoy the daily benefits of their location and are willing to accept the concomitant costs of waterfront life.

A delicate balancing act is necessary: because local residents know their own needs best and must bear the brunt of regional use of surrounding areas, we suggest they be involved in devising strategies to minimize the effects of such uses.

We recommend that, as a general policy goal, planning and development for the waterfront provide an appropriate balance of regional and local recreational opportunities. In order to achieve that goal, we recommend that local residents be consulted when methods are being sought to minimize the impact of regional recreational use of the waterfront.

11. Public Accountability

Public agencies dealing with the waterfront should be accountable to the public — an admirable principle that should be, but hasn't always been, applied to matters of planning, developing, and using the Metro waterfront. Therefore, we recommend that, as a general policy goal, all levels of government, all departments and elected officials, all quasi-independent government-appointed bodies (the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, the boards of Harbourfront and Ontario Place, for example) be publicly accountable.

By accountable, we mean that elected or appointed public officials should be responsible and answerable publicly for their decisions. At the very least, plans, proposals, and budgets should be available for public inspection.

The most extreme example we encountered of current practice involved plans and budgets for Ontario Place. We were given a general, verbal description of sundry proposals for the provincial waterfront playground, but we were not allowed to inspect plans, drawings, or other proposals. The closest we came to seeing anything was a copy of the budget lying on a desk, which was pointed out to us. Ontario Place is particularly shielded from public view: the previous government arranged it — and the current one apparently concurs — so that, unlike other provincial agencies, Ontario Place does not have to report to the Legislature through a legislative committee.

Public accountability clearly involves more than just making plans public if asked to do so — when, and if, a member of the public happens to find out that such a plan or proposal exists. Waterfront agencies, therefore, should, as a matter of course, be required to publish and disseminate their waterfront plans. Moreover, members of the public should be actively involved in the planning process by all waterfront agencies.

The City of Toronto follows the dictates of the *Planning Act* and other official plans when it develops on the waterfront; but not all City departments are equally active or forthcoming about their plans. For example, we were unable to arrange a meeting with the City Parks Department, because the Department interpreted City Council's decision not to participate in the Intergovernmental Waterfront Committee's Work Groups as a directive not to discuss any matters with us.

The City Parks Department is currently using a $250,000 provincial grant to develop a major waterfront parks plan. We hope and expect that it will actively encourage participation, not just by other civic staff, but also by members of the public.

Metro Toronto is involving the public in its current review of the Metro Plan: people interested in presenting their views about the future of the waterfront have had, and will have, opportunities to present their views (but planners have not specifically asked the public to concentrate on waterfront issues, including recreation, transportation, the environment, industry, housing, etc.).

We suggest that Metro planners do precisely that and, further, that they include Exhibition Place on the list of items to receive concerted attention by members of the public. (We heard at least one disaffected person complain, quite eloquently, about what she considered impotent public participation in the Ex. Public involvement there, as elsewhere, should be real, not just *pro forma*.)

Members of the public have certainly not been actively involved in planning for Ontario Place, and they have been only intermittently involved in plans developed by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. (In the latter case, planners have at least consulted with port industries directly affected by the THC plans.)

THC planners have also pointed to the need for user studies of proposed recreational and open spaces. But, so far, the THC has not devised a clear, active, ongoing form of public participation in developing its plans. Because the THC is currently working on a number of detailed sub-area plans for different parts of the recently published *Port Industrial Area Concept Plan*, it should establish a public participation process.

The Royal Commission hearings about the future of THC lands provide a useful way to initiate a more open planning process for the THC — but they should be treated as the beginning, not the end, of a public process.

Members of the public have also been only intermittently involved with Harbourfront. It has been exemplary in reaching out widely in developing its programs, but has not done so when making physical plans for the site.

While public participation is no panacea, some of the conflicts plaguing all the parties involved in Harbourfront could have been reduced or avoided altogether if it had reached out to the public, including area residents, in a more co-ordinated, active fashion. Unfortunately, relationships with the public, including residents and their local political representatives on the City's Harbourfront Review Committee, have become more adversarial than anyone could have wished. It remains to be seen whether they can become more co-operative, but all parties should certainly strive to move things in that direction.

Obviously, true accountability means a genuine public participation process that offers people a real chance of influencing decisions being made by governments or their agencies. While it does not mean that anything the public says will automatically find its way into the final plan or policy statement under consideration, it does presuppose the right of citizens to be heard and be given due consideration.

If their arguments are persuasive, they should influence the final result of the planning process. That does not mean legislative action — although that may be necessary — as much as attitudinal change: many of the people who spoke to us or wrote were sceptical about the likelihood that the Work Group, the Royal Commission, or the Intergovernmental Waterfront Committee would listen to them and make decisions that reflected their concerns.

Many of these people have been "participated to death": they've sat on planning committees, task forces, and working groups that have produced voluminous reports and, in their view, little positive action. We recommend that, as a matter of general policy, all government departments and elected officials, all quasi-independent government-appointed bodies, including the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, Harbourfront, and Ontario Place be publicly accountable. In order to reach that goal:

- free and ready public access to information related to waterfront plans, policy, and budgets must be available, including by dissemination of plans developed by waterfront agencies;
- clearly articulated policies and procedures for public participation must be adopted by all government levels involved in the waterfront planning process.

12. Co-ordination

We began our investigation of the current status of waterfront planning and development expecting to discover examples of jurisdictional overlap, land-use conflict, and determined "defence of turf". We certainly discovered some dramatic examples of each.

Perhaps the clearest example that comes within our purview is the absurd situation involving Ontario Place and Exhibition Place, where turf wars and lack of co-ordination have been the order of the day ever since Ontario Place was plopped by the Province on Exhibition Place's front doorstep in the 1960s — with barely any acknowledgement of the existence of the amenity to the north.

It would have made a great deal more sense then, and continues to make sense now, for the planning, development, and operation of these two major neighbouring amenities to be well and truly co-ordinated.

That may be tough to do: whatever their genesis, the turf wars have been developed to a high art with each side professing willingness to co-ordinate with the other, and blaming the other for being intransigent. In the next breath, each expresses determination to soldier on, irrespective of what the other does. The Province's Ontario Place can do that more readily than the Metro-owned Exhibition Place.

Ontario Place and Exhibition Place comprise the most obvious turf warriors, but they are not the only ones: the Toronto Harbour Commissioners has, over the years, been at odds with a variety of other public agencies dealing with the central waterfront. Even now, while it does consult with them, a course of action that should be praised, when push comes to shove, the THC is so legislatively powerful that it can do most of the shoving.

For example, while the THC prefers to follow local zoning and other regulations, it goes ahead with its plans if it can't "persuade" local planners and council members to change zoning laws, etc. One area in some dispute at the moment is the THC marina, currently rising in the Outer Harbour. The

City of Toronto's recently adopted Central Waterfront Official Plan zones this section of waterlots "Gr", a new and very restrictive category that does not allow recreational use such as a marina.

The THC is formally objecting to this zoning designation, all the while filling waterlots in preparation for creation of the marina. It is not clear how the THC would proceed if it decided not to sell some of its prime waterfront lands to private developers, who must abide by local planning regulations, but, instead, developed the area itself against the wishes of planners or City Council. But under current rules, which do not bind the THC to local zoning, a major confrontation looms.

Other conflicts rage on between levels of government, between quasi-independent public bodies, and even within the same level of government — as, for example, in the current fight for parkland at Harbourfront; it has enveloped the federal Harbourfront corporation, as well as two civic departments, each with a distinctly different view. Matters are about to become even more complicated.

Over the years, Metro has been quiescent in the central waterfront area (except at the Toronto Islands and in relation to a variety of transportation items), and relatively subdued along the Etobicoke and Scarborough waterfront. As a result of changes to Metro Council, which is now elected directly, it gives every indication of being ready to be more active in planning matters.

Because lack of co-ordination across jurisdictional and geographic boundaries is so costly in both dollars wasted and opportunities lost, we recommend that, as a general policy goal, waterfront planning be co-ordinated across those boundaries.

Obviously, just calling for co-ordination will not bring it about and we admit that no easy solution suggests itself. We believe, however, that identifying some of the conflicts, as we have done throughout this Report, is a necessary first step to seeking solutions. Clearly, more will have to be considered in the ongoing work of the Royal Commission and the Intergovernmental Waterfront Committee. In the meantime, we would like to make some suggestions:

> Plans are often undertaken by one body in ignorance of the plans or policies that have been developed, or are being developed, for the site in question. That is probably the most irritating and unnecessary consequence of unco-ordinated planning, but it may be the least difficult to address. Progress could be made if each waterfront stakeholder knew what other stakeholders were thinking and doing. Potential conflicts could be avoided if decision-makers, technical staff, and interested members of the public talked together, on a regular basis, in a regular forum — a "waterfront UN", as it were.

Creation of such a forum seems well within the bounds of possibility; whether a more radical solution is either possible or desirable is beyond the scope of our work. More investigation is needed to determine whether lack of co-ordination could or should be resolved by creating a super agency or by radically revising the powers and mandate of an existing agency. We should caution, however, that not all — and perhaps not even many — planning and land-use conflicts are the result of lack of co-ordination: many are the result of different, but deeply held, visions of "the good waterfront".

In summary, we recommend that, as a general policy goal, waterfront planning across current geographic and jurisdictional boundaries be co-ordinated. We believe this can be done by:

- creating a forum for regular discussion of waterfront issues among decision-makers, technical staff, and interested members of the public;
- analysing how planning and development of the waterfront could be better co-ordinated.

In this section we have built on the sectoral analysis in order to identify a number of general issues that led us to recommend 12 general policy goals and to suggest a number of opportunities for action by various waterfront stakeholders. These provide wide latitude for the Commission to recommend concrete action that would, in our opinion, substantially improve the Metro waterfront.

Conclusions

We deliberately adopted a broad definition of recreation as the pursuit of leisure activities that refresh and rekindle the mind and body; this definition embraces a virtually limitless number of possibilities and events that occur in diverse places. Our Report, therefore, has ranged widely over the waterfront recreational landscape.

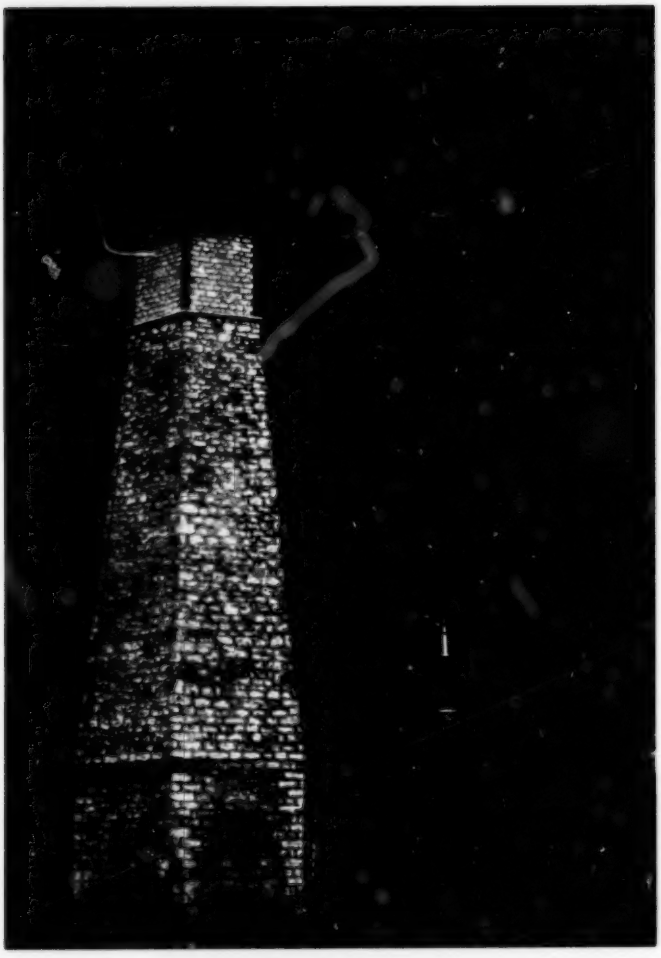
In our efforts to encourage a diverse, lively, publicly accessible, and enjoyable waterfront, our 12 general policy goals and their concomitant strategies include matters affecting both the content and the process of waterfront development. They cover everything from public ownership of the water's edge to the creation of a "waterfront UN", and such items as ecologically sound planning, heritage preservation, and public accountability.

The waterfront UN could begin by addressing such identified problems as lack of information sharing, co-ordination, and public accountability. It might not avoid institutional intransigence, but it would force such obstinacy into the open, where it might become more difficult to justify and sustain. If organized carefully, a regular forum could, we believe, immediately make a significant difference.

In discussing content, we analysed the Metro waterfront sector by sector and made numerous site-specific recommendations to counter problems and take advantage of opportunities.

We found two major possibilities for improving the western waterfront. In Mississauga, special attention should be paid to the remaining six-hectare (15-acre) parcel of the Canada Post/Canadian Arsenals property, which is adjacent to Marie Curtis Park near the Etobicoke border and may soon be sold by the postal corporation.

In Etobicoke, the old Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital site has recently received a great deal of well-deserved attention; with the adjacent Colonel Samuel Smith Park, Humber College lands, and the nearby Metro Water Filtration Plant, it could become a spectacular front door at the lake. A mix of recreational, institutional, and residential uses would be appropriate, but great care must be taken to ensure that any development preserves the historic buildings, the unusually beautiful and historic landscape, and the access to a public waterfront park. Intergovernmental co-operation would make that possible.



Central Waterfront: landmarks old and new.

Etobicoke is currently under tremendous pressure to redevelop its waterfront at locations that seem to increase in number daily. Possible difficulties associated with large-scale redevelopment include the mass and height of new developments, which must be prevented from creating climatic problems or discouraging pedestrian access to the waterfront; environmental concerns, including the possible negative impact of intense waterside urbanization; and further lakefilling.

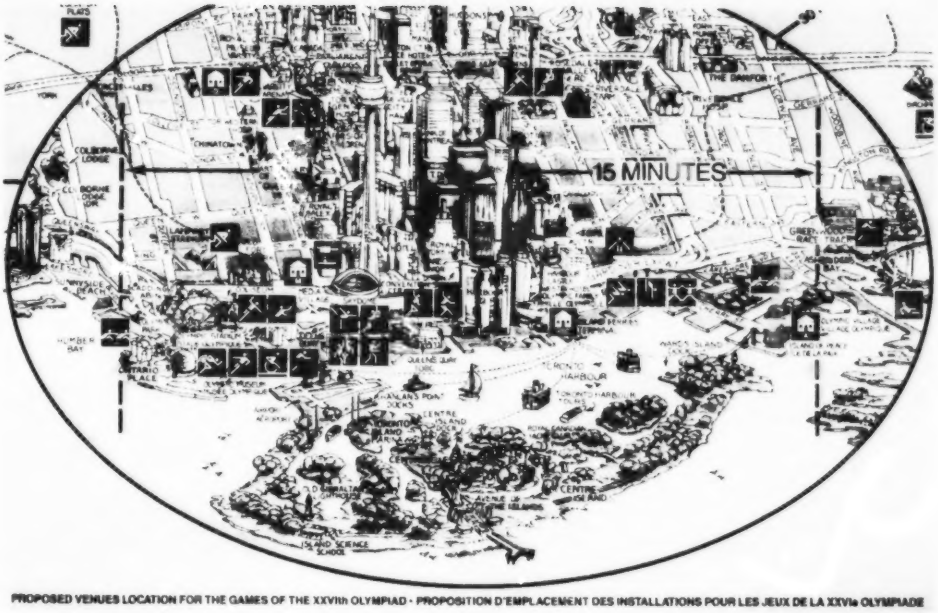
Among the opportunities presented by large-scale redevelopment are a continuous water's edge promenade linking parkettes at suitable locations; new lake views from inland locations; and such public amenities as the recently announced Seaquarium.

Both the possible problems and the possible opportunities are most clearly evident in the Etobicoke motel strip, where judicious balance is needed to ensure that the public interest is well served by private redevelopment.

At the centre of the waterfront lies the City of Toronto, where redevelopment activity proceeds at a feverish pace, with both notable successes and notable controversies.

Our emphasis in this Report is on making individual sites accessible and enjoyable — and, at the same time, ensuring that they are part of the overall diversity of the waterfront. Nowhere is that truer than in the central area, with its working port, urban and urbane Harbourfront park, pastoral islands, cheery Exhibition Place, and untamed Tommy Thompson Park.

We have suggested ways of linking Fort York physically and visually with other important elements of the waterfront and the City; linking Exhibition Place physically and visually with the lake and with Ontario Place by replacing parking lots with parkland; perhaps rebuilding Fort Rouille, the 1750 French fort, as a new attraction; increasing year-round use of the islands and possibly re-opening the Toronto Island Lighthouse, built in 1808 and now the oldest stone building in Toronto and the oldest building of any sort remaining on its original site; improving open space at Harbourfront as a distinctive, varied, and continuous system; and adapting the Canada Malting complex, a monument to the waterfront's industrial heritage, for contemporary use.


15 MINUTES
PROPOSED VENUES LOCATION FOR THE GAMES OF THE XXVIth OLYMPIAD - PROPOSITION D'EMPLACEMENT DES INSTALLATIONS POUR LES JEUX DE LA XXVIe OLYMPIADE

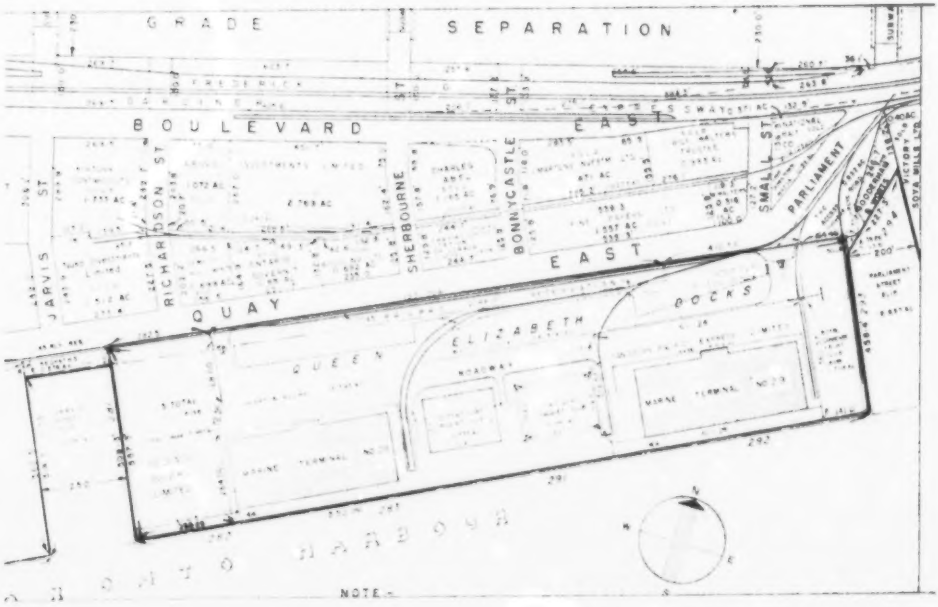
A Waterfront Olympics in 1996?

In the course of the Report, we have also referred from time to time to the two major events that could dramatically alter the face of the Toronto waterfront: the 1996 Olympics and the proposed World Fair in 2000. At the moment, both are being planned and pursued vigorously. Physical, financial, and other plans are still in progress and the outcome is uncertain.

Organizers are developing the concept of a waterfront Olympics, which would clearly have a major impact on the physical fabric of Toronto's waterfront. As it is currently conceived, it would mean redeveloping a large portion — and perhaps all — of the Port Industrial District, where the Olympic Village would rise near Cherry Beach; Exhibition Stadium would be redeveloped as the major track-and-field venue, while other buildings at Exhibition Place would be used for various other sports. There would be a rowing course, most likely involving lakefilling either just west of the Western Gap (with a new Western Gap being developed south of the present Island Airport) or west of Ontario Place across much of Humber Bay toward the mouth of the Humber. Sites would perhaps be tied together by land transportation links, as well as a new system of water shuttles or buses. However, the outcome of all these plans remains uncertain until September 1990, when the winning bid for the 1996 Olympic Games will be announced.

Organizers of the possible World Fair will not release plans for the six-month spectacle until later this spring. Nonetheless, it seems likely that the Fair would be concentrated in the area around Exhibition Place and Ontario Place. Until a decision about the Fair is made, however, and its venue announced, it is hard to evaluate whether it would be of benefit to the waterfront and to the people of Toronto.

Each of the proposed schemes is on a massive scale and each suggests problems and opportunities. Amongst the problems: the possible conflict between an Olympic Village and the Toronto Harbour Commissioners' proposed restructuring of the Port Industrial District; the possibility that spending substantial amounts of public monies will not yield adequate public benefits; the cost of concentrating on short-lived major events rather than dealing with ongoing problems; and the consequences of altering existing shorelines with lakefill.



Proposed "Port View Park" at MT28 and MT29.

Proposed "Port View Park"

Today, only the gulls enjoy the view from MT 28 and 29.

Across the Parliament Street Slip rises Victory Soya Mills.

Among the opportunities: the potential for renovating and rejuvenating historic buildings at Exhibition Place; creating a new water transportation system; developing new residential areas and permanent recreational facilities; the economic benefits to the local economy; and creating both temporary and permanent new jobs. Whatever the arguments either pro or con, a great many details would have to be considered before action is taken on either scheme.

In any event, we recommend that the Commission begin a process that would lead to the development of a major new downtown park, which we have named Port View Park, or, because it encompasses the area now known as the Queen Elizabeth Docks, Queen Elizabeth Port View Park.

We base our reasoning on the fact that, while part of the controversy that has encompassed Harbourfront in the past several years is based on the form and scale of development on the site itself, another part is symbolic, derived from the sense that the entire downtown waterfront is becoming overdeveloped and closed off to public view and use.

To a certain extent, Harbourfront bears the brunt of public displeasure with what has been happening elsewhere, both to its east (the towering additions to Harbour Square) and to the west (the proposed Stadium Road condominium complex). Many Torontonians are afraid they will lose their waterfront, and their fears are not unreasonable. Unless quick action is taken, access to the central waterfront could, indeed, become very limited.

Moreover, an astonishing number of new office and residential towers are approved or under consideration on or near the water between York and Yonge streets. In addition to the Greywood/Harbour Square condominium towers of 37 and 38 storeys, there is Waterpark Place, with one completed 25-storey office building and another of 17 storeys under construction north of Queen's Quay; the three-phase World Trade Centre development — also north of Queen's Quay, which is the site of two 37-storey condominium towers under construction and three more proposed office buildings.

Given all that construction, the office and residential populations of the area are about to increase dramatically, putting more pressure on existing waterfront recreational resources, including Harbourfront.

But that is not the only area in which there will be significant change: mixed-use redevelopment is expected east of Yonge Street, notably at the old Marine Terminal 27 site, between the Yonge Street Slip and the Redpath Sugar Refinery, which (except for a seven-metre strip at the water's edge) has been sold by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. There will possibly be affordable housing on provincially owned lands across Queen's Quay and change is expected in the East Bayfront area because of the much-heralded plans for the St. Lawrence Square development as a community of 12,000 residents, north of the Gardiner and the railway tracks, but in the waterfront orbit.

All of this development, either proposed or under way, is the context in which we propose that the area known as MT 28 and MT 29 be developed as Fort View Park, almost 19 hectares (47 acres) of public open space with a border of more than 900 metres of land at the water's edge in a distinctive location at the eastern end of the Inner Harbour.

The site is publicly owned by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, and we see no justification for selling it for industrial, residential, commercial, or other non-public development. Nor is there any reason that the proposed park could not blend harmoniously with existing industry in the surrounding area. In fact, we see the location, near the heart of the working port, as a distinct bonus that would offer future visitors the opportunity of watching, at first hand, an active port in operation.

The site stretches east from the Redpath Sugar Refinery to the Parliament Street Slip; across from the slip is another distinctive landmark of the working port, Victory Soya Mills. Nearly two hectares (five acres) of the site, adjacent to the Jarvis Street Slip, are currently leased to Redpath for outdoor storage. Another few hectares at the centre of the site, between the 1959 brick terminal buildings, are leased to the Queen's Quay Racquet Club; and less than one hectare (two acres), at the edge of the Parliament Street Slip, is leased for parking and water transportation to the Royal Canadian Yacht Club. Each of the leases would have to be reviewed, to ensure that current use is compatible with the development of the park.

What kind of public place might Port View Park become? First, it would provide generous public access to a part of the waterfront that, for all intents and purposes, has been physically

and visually off-limits to the public. Second, it would provide a generous amount of open space, rather than just the seven-metre promenade strip being preserved around MT 27.

Third, it would provide a window on the working port from which visitors could see ships enter the harbour and be shepherded to their berths by hard-working tugs. The THC might even wish to operate boat tours of the port. Fourth, a variety of public facilities could complement the Port: the park might be an appropriate location for the THC archives, which contain thousands of photographs and Port memorabilia, or for a relocated Marine Museum that could include floating elements of our marine heritage and have more display room for its collection; or the location might make it an appropriate place for a waterfront environmental awareness centre.

Fifth, while it should have generous, well-designed open spaces, the park should contain enough public buildings and uses to animate the spaces, and to provide shelter and year-round vitality.

In sum, we are suggesting an imaginative development that would allay some of the current fears about the future of the downtown waterfront and contribute to the overall strength and diversity we have mentioned so often in this Report.

Finally, we move to the Scarborough waterfront, east of the City of Toronto, where there are barriers to waterfront access: the Bluffs, the railway, and private ownership of stretches of the waterfront. Among our suggestions: linking existing publicly owned nodes (such as Bluffer's, East Point, and Lower Rouge parks; developing pedestrian pathways through the ravines to the Bluffer's Park shoreline and through the woods to the water's edge below the Guild Inn; and creating more bluff-top parkettes and look-out points.

More generally, we would like to encourage the City of Scarborough to adopt an active attitude toward its waterfront and develop its own waterfront policies and plans before intense redevelopment pressures along the Metro waterfront are felt there.

Two major opportunities for improving the Scarborough waterfront now deserve special emphasis. First, the Harrison Estate at Birchmount Road, comprising nearly one-and-a-half hectares (four acres) of lakefront property with three stately

homes on its beautifully landscaped grounds, is for sale. It should be acquired for public purposes, including both open space and appropriate community uses.

Second, redevelopment of the Marra/Manville and other former industrial properties in the Port Union area appears to be imminent. The large Marra/Manville site consists of more than 30 hectares (74 acres) of flat tableland (the asbestos-contaminated top layer of which has been stripped and cleared away); in addition, there is ravine land that dips into the Highland Creek valley system, and a large grassy knoll covering an asbestos storage area.

Obviously, environmental issues must receive high priority in any redevelopment scheme for the site. Assuming that these can be dealt with satisfactorily, it has potential as a mixed-use public waterfront space for both recreation and low-density residences.

As in other parts of this section of Scarborough, the actual shoreline is cut off by the railway line, which would have to be penetrated perhaps by an underpass, so that people could gain actual, as well as visual, access to the lake. Shoreline linkages could be made both eastward toward the mouth of the Rouge River and westward toward the Highland Creek valley system and East Point Park. Assuming the necessary co-operation between the bodies involved, a splendid new waterfront community could be created.

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Appendix 1

Institutional Framework

The Metro waterfront has been shaped, not only by its physical geography and the history of its use, but also by the complex institutional framework that has developed around it. Four levels of government, including more than 30 boards, commissions, special-purpose bodies, and individual government departments, are directly involved in creating today's, and tomorrow's, waterfront.

The federal government, especially but not exclusively through the Toronto Harbour Commissioners and the Harbourfront Corporation, has large land-holdings and a strong, direct interest in waterfront matters. It also exercises considerable influence through such departments as environment, public works, and transportation.

The Province of Ontario created and operates Ontario Place; it owns a considerable amount of other land on or near the water, has jurisdiction over planning in the province, and an interest in many matters that touch directly or indirectly on possible waterfront development, including environment, heritage preservation, transportation, affordable housing, tourism, and recreation.

Metropolitan Toronto owns and manages Exhibition Place and, in concert with the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, is responsible for an extensive regional waterfront park system that includes the non-airport section of the Toronto Islands; Marie Curtis, Col. Sam Smith, and Humber Bay parks in the west; and Bluffer's Park and the lower Rouge in the east. Metro is now reviewing its Official Plan, part of which deals with waterfront issues. It is also responsible for a variety of transportation and water-treatment facilities with a direct impact on the waterfront.

In addition, the cities of Etobicoke, Toronto, and Scarborough, through their official plans and zoning regulations, are primary planning agents and providers of such services as local roads, neighbourhood parks, and recreation programs. The City of Toronto has been the focus of a great deal of waterfront action and has recently adopted an official plan for its central waterfront; the City of Etobicoke is responding to intense redevelopment pressures on a case-by-case basis, while developing

some overall waterfront policies; to date, the City of Scarborough has not experienced such intense redevelopment pressure and has left most waterfront planning and development to the MTRCA.

The following describes the mandates, powers, and approaches of the major waterfront agents of interest to our particular Work Group and it identifies a variety of institutional conflicts and problems that have, or may have, an effect on creating a better waterfront.

Federal Interest

1. Toronto Harbour Commissioners

The Toronto Harbour Commissioners was formed by a federal statute, the *Toronto Harbour Commissioners' Act, 1911*; its board comprises five members, three nominated by the City of Toronto, one by the federal government, and one on the recommendation of the Board of Trade.

The THC's jurisdiction extends from the west bank of the Humber River to the City limits at Victoria Park; and from one mile south of the City, to include all docks, waterfront property, and waterlots within the City limits.

The THC's mandate is to develop, manage, and maintain the harbour and all property in its jurisdiction and it is responsible for buildings over which it has jurisdiction. Under the Act, it can acquire, hold, lease, and dispose of property and is responsible for navigation, including pleasure boating. In meeting its mandate, the THC regulates shipping; operates the port; operates, and partially funds, the Toronto Island Airport (as part of a three-party agreement with Transport Canada and the City of Toronto); constructs and maintains such port facilities as channels, buildings, and transportation equipment; develops land for industrial and other purposes; is the local agency through which harbour, navigational, and channel works are carried out; prepares plans for harbour and port development and redevelopment (for example, the Port Industrial Area Concept Plan, 1988).

2. Harbourfront Corporation

In 1972, the federal government announced it would transform 41 hectares (101 acres) of underused waterfront industrial land into a waterfront park for the citizens of Toronto, in an area bounded by York Street to the east, Stadium Road to the west, Lakeshore Boulevard to the north, and Lake Ontario to the south, and including York, John, Maple Leaf, Spadina, and Bathurst quays.

From 1972 to 1976, no consensus could be reached on developing the site. In 1976, the non-profit Harbourfront Corporation, a Crown corporation, was established to oversee the development and use of the federally owned lands. The corporation has a local board of 13 directors, which reports to the federal Minister of Public Works, and is appointed by the federal government through Cabinet.

The mandate of Harbourfront, according to the *Harbourfront Fact Book*, is to develop the prime waterfront site as a "diverse and attractive neighbourhood of public facilities, shops, and restaurants" by reclaiming and opening this waterfront area for "enjoyment by the public on a year-round basis." In its 1978 Development Framework, the corporation lists four goals: to develop Harbourfront as Toronto's central waterfront through mixed-use development, parks, a water's edge promenade, new streets and water slips; to develop public access, spaces, and recreation programs; to site buildings sensitively, recognizing Harbourfront's unique location, conditions, and history; and to become financially self-sufficient.

According to the *Fact Book*, Harbourfront has to meet other goals between 1987 and 1992; these include increasing Harbourfront's year-round appeal to the public; completing Queen's Quay Boulevard; adding new cultural and recreational activities; ensuring high design standards for future parks; improving public access by establishing better north-south links to downtown and building better roads, walkways, and public transit facilities; setting new standards for public attractions; and reinforcing Harbourfront's potential as a tourist attraction in the context of the waterfront and other downtown amenities.

In addition to the diverse public spaces, public facilities, and public programming, Harbourfront is now home to several thousand people who live in 14 buildings, which range from non-profit co-operatives to luxury condominiums.

Provincial Interest

1. Ontario Place

Ontario Place is a cultural, entertainment, and recreational complex situated across from Exhibition Place, south of Lakeshore Boulevard; it comprises some 38 hectares (94 acres) covering three islands created from lakefill, and includes exhibition pavilions, theatres (including the IMAX Cinesphere), a marina, boat tours, rides, and children's play areas.

The Ontario Place Corporation was established by the Government of Ontario in May 1972; there are 13 board members, who report to the provincial Minister of Tourism and Recreation. The Corporation's mandate, according to the *Ontario Place Annual Report* for 1986-89, is to operate "an innovative, affordable leisure facility that offers cultural and recreational programs in celebration of the Province." Four objectives guide the development of Ontario Place: highlighting the resources, achievements, and possibilities of Ontario both to the residents of the province and to visitors; ensuring excellent recreational and entertainment programs and facilities that attract tourists, as well as all sectors of Ontario's population; ensuring that Ontario Place is affordable and accessible to the public; re-establishing the amenity's leadership and innovation in the leisure industry.

2. Provincial Ministries

Of the several provincial ministries with any degree of influence on planning and developing the waterfront, the most important, from the Work Group's perspective, are the following.

A. The Ministry of Natural Resources is responsible for funding and approving conservation authority programs, including those of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority; grants construction permits for Crown land, including that along the lakebed and the shoreline; oversees the sale of waterlots; has jurisdiction over the lakebed and some sections of the breakwalls; and is responsible for maintaining and protecting fish habitats.

B. The Ministry of the Environment is responsible for administering the *EnvironmentalAssessment Act*, including assessing development proposals and construction practices; has the authority, under the *Water Resources Act*, to stop works that

could adversely affect water quality; and monitors lakefilling under the Lakefill Quality Assurance program (except in the Metropolitan Toronto Region, where it has appointed the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to be responsible for implementing the program).

C. The Ministry of Tourism and Recreation develops, supports, and promotes province-wide tourism and recreation policies; gives capital grants to municipalities for restoring and/or renovating recreation facilities; gives municipal parks departments expert advice on a variety of recreational matters; and includes the stimulation of employment opportunities as part of its mandate. It has given the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department $250,000 to help it develop a major plan for parks in the Central Waterfront Area.

D. The Ministry of Culture and Communications administers the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and supports the work of the Natural Heritage League, a coalition of governmental and non-governmental conservation and protection groups responsible for such initiatives as the Environmental Land Stewardship program.

Metropolitan Toronto Interest

The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto was established by provincial statute in 1953 to deal with such issues of regional concern as water distribution, sewage disposal, arterial roads, public transportation, and major parks. Until 1988, Metro Council was indirectly elected. In November 1988, residents of Metro Toronto directly elected members of Metro Council for the first time, which may have a distinct impact on the Council's attitudes toward and planning of the waterfront.

1. Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department

The 1967 Metropolitan Toronto Waterfront Plan, developed by Metro Toronto's Planning Department, describes the municipality's interest in waterfront development and outlines possible strategies for doing so. It leaves development in Etobicoke and Scarborough to the MTRCA and that in the central section, from Dufferin Street to Coxwell Avenue, to the Toronto Harbour Commissioners and the City of Toronto (excepting Exhibition Place and the Toronto Islands, where Metro remains active). While Metro's Official Plan is under review; Metro planners are considering a number of issues

related to the future of the waterfront, including how demand will probably influence park acquisition and development; Metro's role in the future of the central waterfront; and ways of strengthening Metro's environment policies.

2. Metro Parks and Property Department

Parks and Property manages regional parks, conservation lands, and greenbelt areas; maintains the grounds and buildings at Exhibition Place; and operates the ferry services to the Toronto Islands.

3. Exhibition Place

For more than 100 years, fairs and exhibitions have been held at what is now Exhibition Place, the best-known being the annual Canadian National Exhibition in summer and the Royal Winter Fair each winter. Metro is responsible for planning, developing, and operating the 115-hectare (284-acre) site. In 1985, it established a 14-member Board of Governors — seven appointed by Metro, three by the Canadian National Exhibition Association, and three citizens-at-large, also appointed by Metro, to carry out Metro's mandate.

4. Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

The Metropolitan Toronto Region and Conservation Authority (MTRCA) was established in 1957 by the *Conservation Authority's Act* as a provincial-municipal partnership to manage renewable natural resources in the region's watersheds. It is directed by a 31-member board: three are appointed by the Province; 14 by the member municipalities of Metro; three by Durham Region; five each by Peel and York regions; and one by the Township of Adjala and Mono.

The Authority manages programs that keep the public safe from flooding and erosion; acquires conservation areas and lands that are at risk of flooding; and encourages the use of Authority lands for inter-regional outdoor recreation, heritage preservation, and conservation education.

In 1970, the Province and Metro Toronto selected the Authority to implement the Waterfront Plan for the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Area (except for the waterfront between Dufferin Street and Coxwell Avenue). In 1977, The Authority's waterfront mandate was expanded to include

responsibility for planning and developing Tommy Thompson Park; it was expanded again in 1987 and the MTRCA is now the lead agency responsible for shoreline management along the entire waterfront that is in its jurisdiction.

The Authority has developed numerous regional waterfront parks from Etobicoke to Ajax, using funds provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Metro Toronto, and Durham Region; it has acquired more than 1,200 hectares (2,965 acres) of waterfront land. While there are plans to acquire even more, steadily decreasing funds from the Province of Ontario in the past five years have slowed the pace of land acquisition.

There are several stages to an MTRCA waterfront plan: first, it is presented as a component of the Authority's Watershed Plan; more specific objectives are established in five-year projects that are approved by Metro Toronto, the Region of Durham, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. (The current project covers the years 1987 to 1991.)

5. Metropolitan Toronto Police Force Marine Unit

The Marine Unit was originally established in 1940 and is now a part of the Metro Toronto Police Force, with jurisdiction along the entire waterfront from Etobicoke to Scarborough, including tributaries of Etobicoke Creek, the Humber and Rouge rivers, and extending into the lake to the international border. The Unit polices both land and water at the Metro waterfront, and mounts search-and-rescue operations in conjunction with the Coast Guard.

Municipal Interest

Etobicoke, Scarborough, the City of Toronto, and all other local municipalities on Lake Ontario have a direct interest in how their waterfronts develop; although not all have specific official plans for their respective waterfronts, they all have active planning and parks departments.

1. City Planning and Development Department

The City of Toronto, historically the most active municipality in planning matters, now has the most complex institutional framework for waterfront planning and development. Among the City's primary goals for the central waterfront are promoting public use and enjoyment of a distinctive area in its housing,

commercial, and institutional developments on the waterfront; overcoming physical constraints that lead to feelings of isolation along the waterfront; improving and increasing public open space; expanding and improving recreational activities to make the waterfront a year-round attraction; and improving the environment and aesthetics of the waterfront. The City's Planning and Development Department continues to develop, monitor, and implement policies for the waterfront.

2. City Parks and Recreation Department

The City Parks and Recreation Department is currently undertaking a $500,000 assessment of park and open space opportunities along the central waterfront, and will make specific proposals for major land acquisitions and other policies.
It is negotiating with the Harbourfront Corporation to acquire nearly 90 hectares (222 acres) of parkland. In addition, it develops and maintains such local waterfront parks as Gzowski, Sunnyside, Woodbine, and Balmy Beach, as well as Little Norway at Harbourfront and Polson Street Parkette in the port district. It operates Sunnyside and other City pools and beaches.

3. City Public Works Department

The City Public Works Department constructs and maintains storm sewer outfalls; tests the City beaches for pollution; undertakes some shore protection; and operates and maintains the fireboat *W.L. MacKenzie*.

4. Toronto Historical Board

The City of Toronto Historical Board was incorporated in 1960 by a City of Toronto by-law, under statutory authority of the Province of Ontario's *Ontario Heritage Act*. The 17 member board, appointed by City Council, directs a staff of 70 full-time and 30 part-time members, including planners, architects, and archaeologists.

According to its most recent *Annual Report*, the THB's mandate is to operate and maintain City-owned museums (two of which, Fort York and the Marine Museum, are of direct interest to the waterfront); supervise the duties and functions of a Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) under the *Ontario Heritage Act* on behalf of the City of Toronto; advise City Council on all matters related to the history of Toronto. Its mission is defined as improving the quality of life in Toronto by providing leadership in the preservation of the City's heritage.

Appendix 2

Agencies Interviewed

We wish to thank the following organizations, whose senior officials met with us in the course of our investigations, for their help: the City of Etobicoke's parks, planning, public works, and public health departments; the City of Scarborough's parks, planning, public works, and public health departments; the City of Toronto's Planning and Development Department; Exhibition Place; the Harbourfront Corporation; Heritage Canada; the Marine Unit of the Metropolitan Toronto Policy Force; the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority; the Metropolitan Toronto planning department, the parks and property department; resident and ratepayer associations in Metropolitan Toronto; the Toronto Harbour Commissioners; the Toronto Historical Board; the Toronto Ontario Olympic Council; World Fair 2000; the Ontario Ministry of the Environment; the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation; Ontario Place.

Appendix 3

Individuals and Non-Governmental Organizations Contacted

In the course of our investigations, the following organizations responded to our requests for written comments relevant to our mandate: Friends of the Spit; the Great Lakes International Festival; the Hanlan Boat Club; the Harbour Square Residents and Ratepayers Association; the Harbourfront Residents' Association; the Ontario Sailing Association; the Ontario Water Ski Association; the Outer Harbour Sailing Federation; the Playter Area Residents' Association; the Toronto Boardsailing Club; Toronto Brigantine; Toronto City Cycling Committee; Toronto Field Naturalists; Toronto Island Residents Association; Urban Wilderness Gardeners; Westwood Sailing Club.

The work of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront continues and we hope that any group that was unable to respond while we were in operation will send material to the Commission as it continues its work.

In addition to those we contacted, we received unsolicited briefs from individuals and non-government groups, now on file at the Royal Commission offices and available for inspection by the public. We thank them and their members for their interest.

Appendix 4

Illustration Credits

Frontispiece: View From Ward's Island; Sally Gibson.

Chapter 2: William Armstrong; Detail from Toronto Canada West, 1856; City of Toronto Collection.

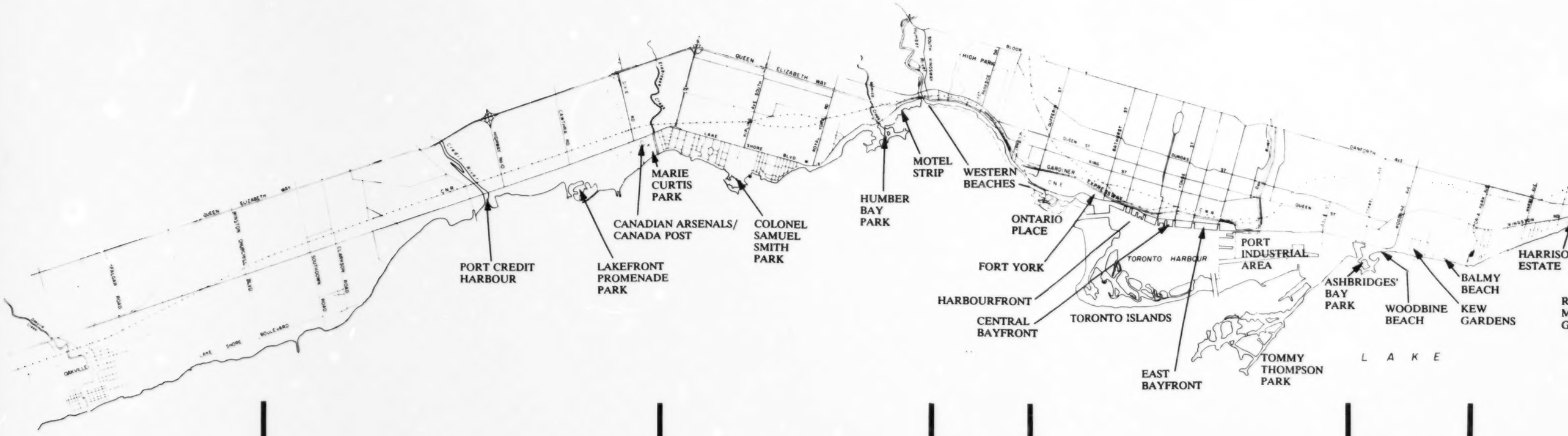
J.T. Downman; Sleighing on Toronto Bay; Clarkson Gordon Collection.

Edwardian post cards, courtesy Sally Gibson

Chapter 3: Etobicoke Redevelopment; Landmarks Old and New; From Scarborough Bluffs; by Sally Gibson. All site photos (other than Fort York) courtesy the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Chapter 4. All photos by Sally Gibson.

Chapter 5: Detail from Olympic map, courtesy the Toronto Ontario Olympic Committee. Map of proposed Port View Park from a map prepared by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. All photos by Sally Gibson.


PORT CREDIT HARBOUR
LAKEFRONT PROMENADE PARK
CANADIAN ARSENALS/ CANADA POST
MARIE CURTIS PARK
COLONEL SAMUEL SMITH PARK
HUMBER BAY PARK
MOTEL STRIP
WESTERN BEACHES
ONTARIO PLACE
FORT YORK
HARBOURFRONT
CENTRAL BAYFRONT
TORONTO ISLANDS
EAST BAYFRONT
TOMMY THOMPSON PARK
PORT INDUSTRIAL AREA
TORONTO HARBOUR
ASHBRIDGES' BAY PARK
WOODBINE BEACH
KEW GARDENS
BALMY BEACH
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MISSISSAUGA SECTOR
ETOBICOKE SECTOR
WESTERN BEACHES SECTOR
CENTRAL SECTOR
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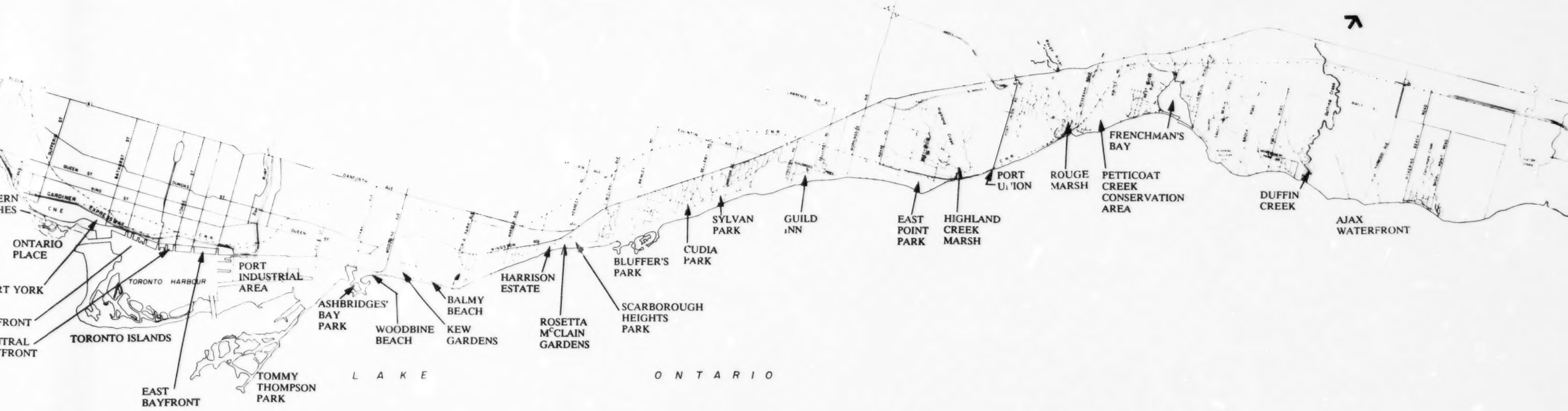

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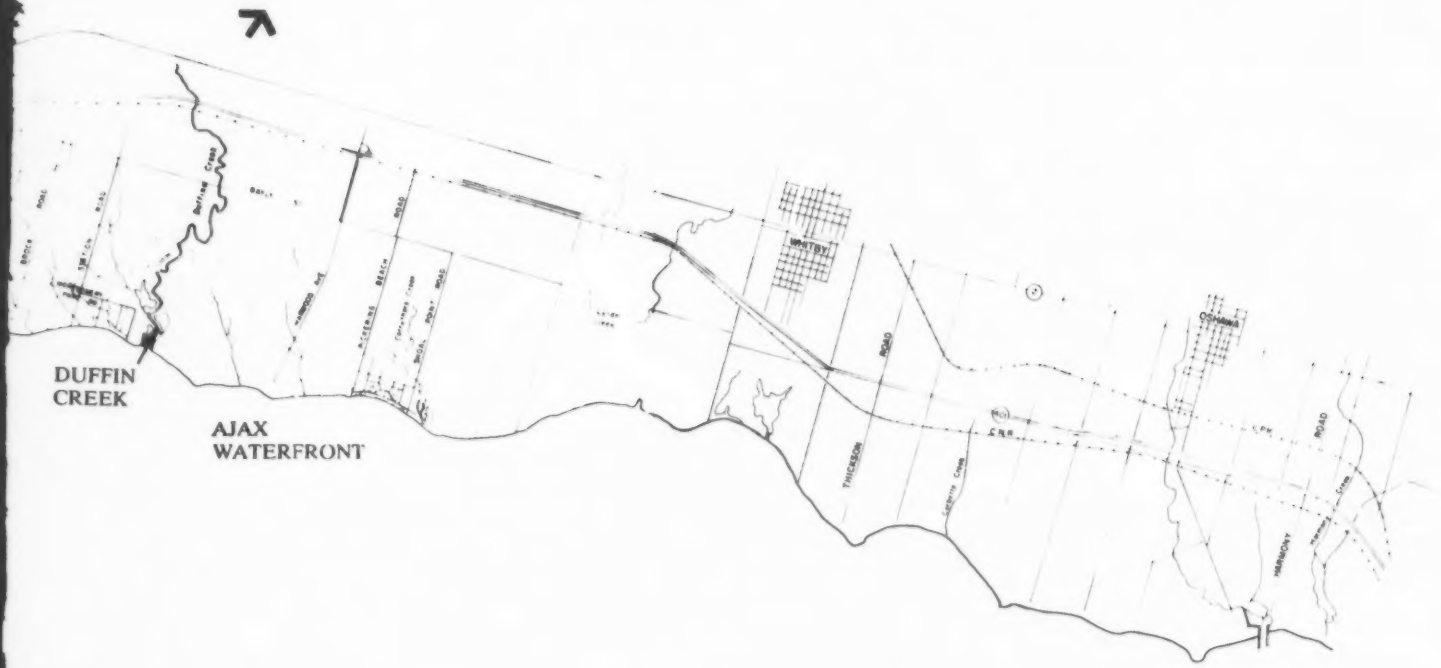
CENTRAL SECTOR

EASTERN BEACHES SECTOR

SCARBOROUGH SECTOR

PICKERING/AJAX SECTOR



METROPOLITAN TORONTO AND REGION WATERFRONT

G/AJAX SECTOR